Fatherly Love In My Papa’s Waltz

Fathers have a huge impact on a child’s life. This impact can have either negative or positive results on the child. Both of the poems reviewed are about the fathers of Theodore Roethke and Syliva Plath. Roethke’s poem could have a double meaning with the story could be either positive or negative. The interpretation for Roethke depends on the outlook of the reader, whereas Plath told a complete story explaining why she is so mad about the death of her father.

Theodore Roethke's 'My Papa's Waltz' gives the description of the occurrence in his childhood. In what seems to be a regular event; his dad, who is a drunk, comes home at night stinking of drink and begins to dance with him. Theodore described these paws of his dad as being highly soiled and battered on one knuckle. This poem describes the scene where they danced until pans in the room slipped off the kitchen shelf. Eventually, his dad waltzed him to rest in bed. The poem “My Papa’s Waltz” by Theodore Roethke presents a memory from a young boy waltzing with his father. The waltz is a metaphor that represents the relationship the boy has with his father. Some say that “My Papa’s Waltz” is a joyful and uplifting poem that describes the relationship between the boy and his father. Although the poem may seem like a happy and sweet story of a father and son dancing in the kitchen there are also darker underlying tones.

Although “My Papa’s Waltz” isn’t completely different than “Daddy”, it also depends on the outlook of the reader when interpreted. The poem “Daddy” by Sylvia Plath is dark and descriptive to the reader. This poem is about a father and daughter. The speaker refers to her father as “Daddy” throughout the poem. It is inferred that the speaker does not have a good relationship with her father and is troubled by this. The speaker uses many descriptions and comparisons to describe her feelings throughout the poem. The short poem “Daddy” illustrates how important it is for a child to have a relationship with his or her father. The main theme in this poem is the loss of a loved one. Here, Sylvia Plath is clearly the speaker in the poem. She is very depressed and angry that her father died and she blames him for leaving her. People who have experienced a traumatic childhood loss of a parent often grow up to blame the one who is dead. This loss is not necessary for the happiness of a family because of all the apparent grief that it brings.

Throughout the poem, 'My Papa's Waltz' by Theodore Roethke, many techniques are used to show that there are furious conflicts between a father and his son. Roethke uses the word waltz in the title to relate to the beating of the son. I believe that the poem is altogether a negative poem, as described by the words and phrases the author uses. Roethke uses the word waltz in the title to relate to the beating of the son. -'misinterpretations of a waltz' in my papa’s waltz 'we romped until the pans / slid from the kitchen shelf' (5-6). the mother’s position is depicted next: “my mother’s countenance/ could not unfrown itself” (7-8). Within the line, “such waltzing was not easy,” is the proposal this is not a singular incident, but rather a routine ritual between the boy and his father (line 4).

“Daddy” is more historically based than “My Papa’s Waltz”. The time frame in which both poems were written is about 20 years apart. The time frame that Plath explains in her poem “Daddy” is certainly a difficult one: its violent imagery, invocation of Jewish suffering, and the tone can make it a decidedly uncomfortable reading experience. Overall, the poem relates

Plath's journey of coming to terms with her father's looming figure; he died when she was eight. She casts herself as a victim and him as several figures, including a Nazi, vampire, devil, and finally, as a resurrected figure of her husband, whom she has also had to kill.

“My Papa's Waltz” is a childhood memory written later in his lifetime. Theodore Rothke's dad was about an alcoholic drunk. Theodore Rothke went through a period where he was depressed and mentally unstable. Some people who read My Papa's Waltz come to the conclusion that it is about a drunk abusive father. Unlike “Daddy” where Path is mourning over her dead father. Something that stood out to me is that both of these poems express powerful tones to make their point across to the reader.

It is really hard to imagine that any of Sylvia Plath's poems could leave the reader unmoved. 'Daddy' is evidence of her profound talent, part of which rested in her unabashed confrontation with her personal history and the traumas of the age in which she lived. That she could write a poem that encompasses both the personal and historical is clear in 'Daddy.' She has an uncanny ability to give meaningful words to some of the most inexpressible emotions. She writes in a way that allows the reader to feel her pain. In this poem “Daddy”, she writes about her father after his death. This is not a typical obituary poem, lamenting the loss of the loved one, wishing for his return, and hoping to see him again. Rather, Plath feels a sense of relief at his departure from her life. She explores the reasons behind this feeling in the lines of the poem.

In my childhood, I never knew my biological father. No one in my family knows who he is or where he is. I grew up without a father figure in my life for 10 years, but when my mother got diagnosed with colon cancer and died I was adopted by my sister. I finally had a father in my life. My dad and I do not always get along, but I love him with all my heart. He has shown me how to be a gentleman and has been a positive role model for me. I am incredibly grateful to have him in my life. He has always taught me to be my best. In sports especially, he told me to pay attention to everyone in practice, learn all the positions, and have perfect effort. I listened to him and it paid off. I could play all three receiver spots, and running back positions. He has taught me so much in such a little time. He is 67 years old, grumpy, and talks way too much about the weather, but I wouldn’t trade him for anyone else.

In conclusion, both of these poems contribute to get their points across by expressing thoughts and feeling through examples given and literary devices. Through the eyes of a child, kids will always remember things from a young age if it causes them any type of different emotion than normal. This is possibly why Theodore waited to write “My Papa’s Waltz”. He was scarred from when his father came home and continuously did the same actions over and over again. Even his mother couldn’t handle it. She couldn’t do anything about it without the fear of getting hurt herself. Plath’s poem was darker. She was mad that her father died. She was in a state of mind of grieving, which everyone goes through when someone dies. They both developed their personal experiences into excellent poems that moved every reader's heart.