**The Judgment of Paris**

**Metaphor**:

**VIC**:

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|  | Long afterwards the intelligent could deduce what had been offered and not recognized and they suggest that bitterness should be confined to the fact that the gods chose for their arbiter a mind and character so ordinary  albeit a prince  **Tone and Characterization**: What is the author’s attitude toward Paris here?  **VIC**:  **VIC**:  and brought up as a shepherd  a calling he must have liked  for he had returned to it  when they stood before him  the three naked feminine deathless and he realized that he was clothed  in nothing but mortality the strap of his quiver of arrows crossing  between his nipples making it seem stranger  **Irony/Contrast and Imagery**: How does the author establish a startling contradiction in this stanza?  and he knew he must choose and on that day  the one with the gray eyes spoke first  and whatever she said he kept thinking he remembered but remembered it woven with confusion and fear  the two faces that he called father the first sight of the palace where the brothers were strangers and the dogs watched him and refused to know him  she made everything clear she was dazzling she offered it to him to have for his own but what he saw was the scorn above her eyes and her words of which he understood few  all said to him  *Take wisdom take power  you will forget anyway*  Why are these words italicized? What can you infer from them?  **Inference**: What does Paris see in this goddess? What might this suggest about what he sees in himself?  **Characterization**: Which goddess is described in this stanza? How is she characterized?  **Inference**: What does the author imply about Paris’ relationship with his family?  the one with the dark eyes spoke  and everything she said  he imagined he had once wished for  but in confusion and cowardice  the crown of his father the crowns the crowns bowing to him  his name everywhere like grass only he and the sea  triumphant she made everything sound possible she was dazzling she offered it to him to hold high but what he saw  was the cruelty around her mouth and her words of which he understood more  all said to him  *Take pride take glory  you will suffer anyway*  **Contrast/Irony**: How does the goddess’ offer conflict with what he sees in her face?  **Characterization**: Paris: How do Paris’ desires conflict with his basic nature?  **Characterization**: Which goddess is described in this stanza? How is she characterized?  the third one the color of whose eyes  later he could not remember  spoke last and slowly and of desire and it was his  though up until then he had been  happy with his river nymph  here was his mind  filled utterly with one girl gathering  yellow flowers and no one like her  the words  made everything seem present  almost present  present they said to him  *Take  her you will lose her anyway*  **Characterization**: Which goddess is described in this stanza? How is she characterized?  **Diction/Repetition**: What is the effect of repetition here?  **Themes/Inference**: What does the change in him suggest about the influence of the gods on mortal lives?  **Themes/Inference**: What does this mean? Why might he be unable to recall her specific eye color?  Why are these words italicized? What can you infer from them?  Why are these words italicized? What can you infer from them?  it was only when he reached out to the voice  as though he could take the speaker  herself that his hand filled with  something to give  but to give to only one of the three  an apple as it is told  discord itself in a single fruit its skin  already carved *To the fairest*  **Themes/Inference**:  What is happening simultaneously in these stanzas?  What does this suggest about the impact of an individual’s decisions?  then a mason working above the gates of Troy  in the sunlight thought he felt the stone  shiver  **Foreshadowing**:  in the quiver on Paris’s back the head  of the arrow for Achilles’ heel  smiled in its sleep  **Foreshadowing**:  and Helen stepped from the palace to gather  as she would do every day in that season  from the grove the yellow ray flowers tall  as herself  **Characterization/Irony**: Helen  whose roots are said to dispel pain  **Irony**:  —*W. S. Merwin* |
|  | Source:Merwin, W. S.  “The Judgment of Paris.”  *The Second Four Books of Poems*.  Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon P, 1993 (1970).  146-8. |

**Structure**: Note the use of punctuation in the poem. What is the effect of the author’s choices in punctuation?

**Structure**: Note the separations between stanzas in this poem. What is the effect of the author’s choice to lay his poem out in this way?

VIC: