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**ANSWER SHEET**  
**FEUILLE DE RÉPONSES**  
**HOJA DE RESPUESTAS**

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Question Question Pregunta	<p style="text-align: center;">11</p> <p>1. "Birth of the Owl Butterflies" by Ruth Sharman is a poem which perpetually contests the apparently most self-evident facts about itself. From the title, one can generally assume that the poem will go on to describe the "birth" which it promises to, but it doesn't fully deliver. Taken at face value, the poem is about the hatching and ultimate death of the butterflies at the hand of the speaker's <del>the</del> "gentle-fingered" father. Hence, the title becomes ironic once the poem is read and <del>prefigures</del> foreshadows the irony-laden poem which appears at some points to be concerned with birth and life, but at others, with death. <del>The poem is about</del></p> <p>The entire poem is written over six stanzas with each stanza being eight lines in length - rigid <del>but</del> <sup>structurally mimetic</sup> of the approach of the speaker, who describes the events around her with such a matter-of-fact tone. The first lines of the poem are so plain they are almost lulling. The butterflies which have "hung in [her] kitchen for days" in all their quiet and stillness mimicking death, are not brought to life. Instead, they become "a row of brown lanterns that [throws] no light." She makes them inanimate and dismisses them to "a shelf among the knick-knacks." Thus, the insignificance of their</p>	Examiner Examineur Examinador
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a personal response shown

might not have been provided

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existence is "pinned" in the first stanza, but is not exceptional to it. In the first stanza, she tells us by breaking the sentence structurally and without explanation what she is addressing with the impersonal pronoun of "they": "Six Central American *Caligo chrysalidis*." This line, which has been constructed to be the stand alone line of the stanza ~~is~~ uses sibilance to set the soothing mood which dominates the poem, the insignificance of the butterflies reverberated by their distance from "their mountain home." ~~The~~ The insignificance of their existence, or perhaps its brevity and ephemerality, is enhanced in the second stanza where they are referred to indirectly as the result of her father's work. Their fate is already ~~set~~ set for "display." In the final stanza, the speaker finally refers to herself directly, but she does so by saying she "pictured ~~the~~ them." The fact that she is an observer, she distances herself from what is happening contributes to a ~~tone~~ <sup>tone</sup> which is almost dead-pan. Coupled with the matter-of-fact approach, the mood that emerges is one which is almost scientific in its craft of displaying "Caligos." It is devoid of emotion. ~~The~~

But perhaps this isn't done without a hint of irony. She begins the poem by describing the length with which the butterflies have been present, but ~~the~~ <sup>she</sup> only really describes an instance in time by the end of it. The ~~overall~~ overarching structure is stagnant, but the life of the poem and the butterflies is in the details and subtle ironies peppered throughout the stanzas. Even the "brown lanterns that [throw] no light" can be taken with ~~some~~ irony as the butterflies are made inanimate, but then the object which



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they become is personified with "them."

In the third ~~stanzas~~ and fourth stanzas, the intensity with which she describes the butterflies grows from stagnant to full-blooded and bristling with life. The personified fruit "matures" and explodes. The choice of positives in "pods [exploding]" gives an intensely physical image and animates the seemingly lifeless butterflies. The soothing tone is disrupted by the third stanza's use of the cacophonous "exploded" and "crackling in the quiet kitchen." The displacement of the mood is enhanced by the ~~stanzas~~ strained metaphor of a "frog missile", which is then followed by heavy enjambment. As the butterfly ~~is~~ "desperate to break free", the enjambment serves as an actual break in the grammatical structure of the stanza and makes physical the awkwardness with which the butterfly "[unhinges] its awkward legs" by portraying it ~~as aesthetically unpleasant~~ as aesthetically unpleasant. The third stanza is ultimately ~~described~~ "like a fully party dress / [a] crumpled mass." But the fourth stanza takes this disruption of mood and builds on it immediately with alliteration in "clung" and "cloven" and "billowed with blood." The ~~stanzas~~ ~~stanzas~~ fifth stanza builds on this too, describing the "nine-inch wings" of the butterfly, but brings to light

Good ideas  
to present  
but need  
to analyse  
the effect.

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the very once again. The matter-of-fact part is mentioned only to express the enormity of the butterfly and perhaps its grandiose existence.

This sense of a grandiose existence juxtaposed against an insignificant one is what perhaps is the central concern of the poem. It brings to light all of the ironies. Perhaps the most full-blooded lines are at the end of the fourth stanza when "boldly ~~by~~ rimged in black and gold / two fierce owl-eyes widened." The ~~next~~ last line exemplifies a preternatural boldness which exceeds the existence of the butterfly. It is described as another species' eyes. This could make it significant, but it could also make it grandiose. The ambiguity, however, is imperative. Long is not just a device in the poem, it is a technique. The "Enveloping" of the father's "gentle" fixes once again contrasts the stagnancy of their existence with a swiftness, ~~and~~ a brevity. The last line contradicts itself nearly with wings beating vigorously then becoming still. This returns to the matter of fact stillness of the first stanza, but perhaps their existence transcends their lives. They will meet their purpose in death as displays. It is insignificant of an existence to us, but ~~maybe~~ may be a grandiose transcendence for the ~~poorly~~ butterflies.

A-4 B-3 C-3 D-4 E-5  
= 19-19

Quite nice please