The Blossom

A May moming. Light starting in the sky.   
I have come here

after a long night.

The blossom on the apple tree is still in shadow.

its petals half white and filled with water at the core.   
in which the secrecy and freshness of dawn are

stored '

even in the dark.

*How much longer will I see girlhood in my   
daughter?*

In other seasons.

I knew every leaf on this tree.

Now I stand here almost without seeing them

and so lost in grief

notice what is happening   
 as the light increases

and the blossom speaks

arid turns to me with blond hair   
and my eyebrows and says--

Imagine if I stayed here

Even for the sake of your love.

What would happen to the summer? To the fruit?

Then holds out a dawn-soaked hand to me   
whose fingers I counted at birth

years ago

and touches mine for the last time

and falls to earth.

Eavan Boland

Student Response

I see what Eavan Boland is experiencing in myparents; it is rather interesting. My mother has always been very protective, especially of my sister. My mother had a very difficult time allowing me to begin traveling across the country every month with Key Club, and she is fretting even more now that I am soon to leave for college. She sees my sister as vulnerable to every danger imaginable, form Internet stalkers to third-world terrorists. She views us much like Boland seen to view her daughter, as a growing blossom that must eventually separate from the roots from which it sprung.

Boland uses the metaphor of the tree and the blossom in several ways. First, she uses the relationship in illustrating the complection of her daughter's childhood. She remarks that the blossom is still on the tree, "in shadow," and then laments, "How much longer will I see girlhood in my daughter," setting up the analogy. The grown blossom falls to the ground at the poem's conclusion, illustrating the final separation of mother and daughter and also the daughter's promise to spring new life and carry on nature's cycle.

Incidentally, the natural quality of the cycle of children growing into adulthood to bear more children is another reason Boland uses the imagery of Mother Nature. She is able to intertwine two different facets of life, those of trees and humans, demonstrating them to be part of the same great scheme.

My mother would immensely enjoy this poem--she can surely empathize with it. My sister would also take pride in and advantage of the fact that Boland's daughter, the blossom, appeals to the inevitable fact that she must be independent or else the world would fail to benefit from her abilities. My mother would most likely blot that line from her memory. My father ? He would not look twice from Monday Night Football if I asked to read this poem, but neither would I if our situations were reversed.

Nevertheless, I enjoyed it because it was more applicable to my life than any I have analyzed thus far.

Wil Loftis