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Oliver digs deep into a world most only inhabit in their dreams, a world that
in which everything comes alive, a world
in which the sun is so bright, the grass
so green, life so filled to the brim that the
only reasonable response is an overwhelming
yearn and excitement—at once one emotion.

Although the writer, "do not this not also
frightening?" The reader is unconvinced
that she herself is frightened. She is the
same woman who wrote gratuitously about
the owl's insatiable craving for the taste of
 brains.

The author's response to nature is strong and vivi:
It is at once part of her every day life.
For "there is only one world," and it is a secret world—
a secret garden, if you will, having nothing to
do with her own "boredom, intelligent, funny
life." Oliver, wearied instinct with modern
society's natural tendency. She indulges
in feeling "the stark, pure feeling of an oak
taken. She is so caught by the scene that
she is overcome with "immobilizing happiness.
It seems she too "would eat the whole
world." She does let me peak into reality
every so often and the reader is taken
in and out of Oliver's excursions as if following her
in a dream that she wakes from momentarily
and then falls back into.
Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

Question 2

There is something too close about Oliver and her roses. Her oil! Something so sensual, that it at once creates an awkward, indulgent feeling. Like Léa's relationship to the cat, Saba in Colette's The Cat, Oliver is in love—in lust with the world and its "sweetness so palpable and excessive." Her experience in the garden, her feeling of being taken over by nature that the "dropped to the sand and cannot move" is the climax of her experience with nature. Her experience with nature so permeates her writing that the whole passage can seem almost as though it were a sexual encounter. All the masculine passion, the inalienable hunger embodied in the oil and the roses, consume the woman in a wonderful pleasure unmatched by any other mental or physical orgasm a mere mortal could produce in her. It is as if she has been impregnated by desire. It is as if she were Ledas, only her swan is an oil lamp. Her description of nature bears a resemblance to Yeats's poem, though it is much more subtle. It is irrational too, in that she describes the encounter from the woman's view.
Owls, according to Mary Oliver, represent the terrible aspects of nature. It is a nature that "eats" (33), devours in fact, and one that kills without remorse, and yet she acknowledges that nature also contains the beautiful "flowered fields that immobilize” (53) one with their loveliness and sweet smell. Nature contains both awesome terror and awesome joy, and thus is the contradiction that this passage addresses.

One of the most obvious techniques that Oliver uses is simple massing of details—nouns and adjectives piled and heaped on top of each other, clearly emphasizing Oliver's point that nature is massive, for good or bad. The great horned owl kills eight separate kinds of animals (15-22), while the fields of poppies and lupines fill the air with an abundance of sweet smells (45-48). The fact that such great destruction and beauty exist in nature furthers Oliver's theme.

At the same time, Oliver avoids concrete detail. She will enumerate effects of nature, but she will not describe precisely what an owl or flower looks like, except in terms of other natural things, such as "moths" (7) or sand dunes (44). Something that is massive and that can only be described in terms of itself takes on unique properties in the mind of one who considers it, and nature, in this story, does just that, becoming still more grand.

In addition, Oliver furthers her description of nature through the use of repetition. She repeatedly uses "I" or "they" to begin sentences, which adds to the assessment of details described above. Similarly, she
A series of very powerful effects when thinking about the fields of flowers (48-49), and uses "in" to link them together. Each of these uses of language evoke images of nature as something that takes a powerful effect, much as a hammer does.

The imagery in this piece adds the final touch to its effect. The great horned owl is characterized by images of night, twilight, and blackness, while the flowers are associated with "red and pink and white." It is true that other colors appear in the descriptions of other owls, but these owls represent less extreme aspects of nature. The focus of the passage is on the extreme of terror and the extreme of beauty, and on the fact that the unimaginable intensity of both makes nature as a whole "terrifying" and "frightening" (54).

In short, nature is characterized as vast, and as powerful, and as very two-sided, but always as mysterious. It is the contradictory and mysterious combination of the owl and the flower in nature that, according to Oliver, makes it so magnificent, and causes her complex feelings.
Oliver recognizes the overwhelming power and mystery of nature visible in this passage about the great horned owl. This concept is carried over to the reader by the effective use of detail and syntax. Through these rhetorical techniques, the amazing complexity of nature is portrayed, as well as its overwhelming influence on humans.

The detail paints a picture of nature with its "heavy, crisp, breathing snapping." The detail gives this passage so much of its effectiveness. It portrays nature, with all of its sheer eliciting glory of the death-bringer.

The description of Nature's raw power is evident, and the human's place in this great chain is diminished by "A sweetness so palpable and excessive, that, before it, I'm stricken." Nature is an unexplainable force that humans cannot control or predict as this passage so effectively portrays. This specific detail gives realism to the passage and allows the reader to feel and see "the headless bodies" and the "gleam of its feathers." Through this detail and imagery, every aspect of nature is portrayed, showing its realistic and raw facts. The repeated "scream of the rabbit" compared to the "owl's anguished song" help to portray a image of the great complexity that is so characteristic of nature. Every detail adds to Oliver's accepted acceptance of nature being a force indescribable in its complexity and splendor. Death
is portrayed not as cruelty, but as "the mystery" a central theme.

"There is only one world" this short, simple sentence is emphasized greatly by its location. It conveys Oliver's realization of the complexity and power that she does not understand, but feels around her. The syntax is varied throughout the passage corresponding with her own mixed feelings. "which waits and hangs everywhere" these sentences are structured by her own train of thought and flow with her descriptions of nature. "They are the pure... They are swift", the parallel structure used throughout the passage draws emphasis to the various descriptions, such as the nature of the great horned owl. The rhetorical questions also are effective in depicting Oliver's uncertainty in the complexity of nature. "Is this... not also frightening?" These questions force the reader to consider the situation of human beings in nature, a topic she is also struggling to understand. The syntax effectively conveys the power and complexity of nature. It succeeds in keeping parallelizing Oliver's feelings of doubt dealing with human's place in nature as well as her own personal questions.

Nature as Oliver depicts it is too complex for a simple analysis or conclusion. Humans do not understand everything about nature, and cannot control every aspect of nature. The mysterious...
quality is what is so amazing about it.

Oliver portrays this mystery through her use of details and syntax to describe this image of nature.