

Identify the poem from the first few lines. How much can we tell about the speaker and their attitude from these lines?

I shrank myself
to the size of a bird in the hand

All I know is this:
he went out for his walk a man

At childhood's end, the houses petered out
into playing fields, the factory, allotments

Firstly, his hands – a woman's.

The bed we loved in was a spinning world
of forests, castles, torchlight, clifftops, seas

Ice in the trees.
Three Queens at the Palace gates,

That's him pushing the stone up the hill, the jerk.

First things first –
I married _____.
We met as students,

I remember peeping in at his skyscraper room
and seeing him fast asleep.

By Christ, he could bore for Purgatory.

I'm fond, nereids and nymphs, unlike some, of the pig,

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The Devil was one of the men at work.
Different. Fancied himself.

I sank like a stone
into the still, deep waters of late middle age,

I had grieved.

Ladies, for argument's sake, let us say
That I've seen my fair share of ding-a-ling, member and jock,

There go the twins! Geezers would say
when we walked down the frog and toad

Cold, I was, like snow, like ivory.
I thought *He will not touch me*,
but he did.

In the convent, y'all,
I tend the gardens,

Where I lived – winter and hard earth.

These myths going round, these legends, fairytales,
I'll put them straight;

At first, I looked along the road
hoping to see him saunter home

Girls, I was dead and down
in the Underworld, a shade,