

ENGLISH



THE LABURNUM TOP

~Summary~

-by Ted Hughes**Stanza- 1**

The Laburnum top is silent, quite still
In the afternoon yellow September sunlight,
A few leaves yellowing, all its seeds fallen.

Explanation: The poet describes a beautiful sunny autumn. The Laburnum tree is silent and still. It is laden with yellow leaves and yellow flowers in September. Its leaves have turned yellow because of the autumn season and all its seeds have fallen.

Stanza- 2

Till the goldfinch comes, with a twitching chirrup,
A suddenness, a startlement, at a branch end.
Then sleek as a lizard, and alert, and abrupt,
She enters the thickness, and a machine starts up
Of chitterings, and a tremor of wings, and trillings
The whole tree trembles and thrills.
It is the engine of her family.
She stokes it full, then flirts out to a branch-end
Showing her barred face
identity mask.

Explanation: Just then a goldfinch alights on the Laburnum tree making short, high-pitched sounds. The goldfinch has her nest in the tree and her chicks are resting in the nest. On the mother's return, a sudden movement stirs the tree. Her little ones are excited on her arrival and start chirruping. The cautious mother enters the tree with great care so that no predator can come to know that her babies are housed in the nest. The poet has compared the alert, abrupt and sleek movement of the goldfinch with that of a lizard. The goldfinch has been called the engine of her family. Just as the engine starts up the machine, her arrival in the nest has suddenly started up the silent machine (nest) i.e. the young ones have started chittering and making noise. By feeding her young ones, she has added fuel to the machine and as a result the chicks now have the energy to be active and make noise. After feeding her chicks, the goldfinch flies up and rests on the end of a branch of the tree, her identity concealed behind the yellow flowers and yellowing leaves.

Stanza- 3

Then with eerie delicate whistle-chirrup
whisperings She launches away, towards the infinite
And the Laburnum subsides to empty.

Explanation: After some time, the goldfinch makes a strange short, high-pitched sound. Then she flies away towards the infinite sky. The Laburnum tree becomes silent again after the departure of the goldfinch and everything seems to be the same as it was before the arrival of the goldfinch.