Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



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**The Dinner Party by Mona Gardner**

The country is India. A colonial official and his wife are giving a large dinner party. They are seated with their guests – army officers and government attaches and their wives, and a visiting American naturalist – in their spacious dining room, which has a bare marble floor, open rafters and wide glass doors opening onto a veranda.

A spirited discussion springs up between a young girl who insists that women have outgrown the jumping-on-a-chair-at-the-sight-of-a-mouse era and a colonel who says that they haven’t. “A woman’s unfailing reaction in any crisis,” the colonel says, “is to scream. And while a man may feel like it, he has that ounce more of nerve control than a woman has. And that last ounce is what counts.”

The American does not join in the argument but watches the other guests. As he looks, he sees a strange expression come over the face of the hostess. She is staring straight ahead, her muscles contracting slightly. With a slight gesture she summons the native boy standing behind her chair and whispers to him. The boy’s eyes widen: he quickly leaves the room.

Of the guests, none except the American notices this or sees the boy place a bowl of milk on the veranda just outside the open doors.

The American comes to with a start. In India, milk in a bowl means only one thing – bait for a snake. He realizes there must be a cobra in the room. He looks up at the rafters – the likeliest place – but they are bare. Three corners of the room are empty, and in the fourth the servants are waiting to serve the next course. There is only one place left – under the table.

His first impulse is to jump back and warn the others, but he knows the commotion would frighten the cobra into striking. He speaks quickly, the tone of his voice so arresting that it sobers everyone.

“I want to know just what control everyone at this table has. I will count to three hundred – that’s five minutes – and not one of you is to move a muscle. Those who move will forfeit fifty rupees. Ready!”

The twenty people sit like stone images while he counts. He is saying “…two hundred and eighty..” when, out of the corner of his eye, he sees the cobra emerge and make for the bowl of milk. Screams ring out as he jumps to slam the veranda doors safely shut.

“You were right, Colonel!” the host exclaims. “A man has just shown us an example of perfect control.”

“Just a minute,” the American says, turning to his hostess, “Mrs. Wynnes, how did you know that the cobra was in the room?”  
 A faint smile lights up the woman’s face as she replies: “Because it was crawling across my foot.”

**Complete the plot diagram using the events from the story *The Dinner Party* by Mona Gardner**

Resolution

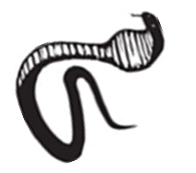
Falling Action

Climax

Rising Action

Conflict

Exposition

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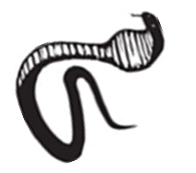
**From Prose to Poetry**Now you will take the elements of this narrative story (prose) and turn them into a narrative poem! Your poem should mirror the events and the tone of the story!

**Must Haves:**

* Your poem must be at least 3 stanzas
* Use a simile or a metaphor (highlight in your poem where you use it)
* Use either alliteration or onomatopoeia (highlight in your poem where you use it)
* Use either end rhyme or a line of internal rhyme (highlight in your poem where you use it)
* Same tone as the short story (Underline in the poem at least two words that contribute to the tone)
* Same characters, setting, conflict, climax and resolution as story

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Format** | The poem is written in at least three stanzas |  | The poem does not include at least 3 stanzas |
| **Poetic Devices** (simile/metaphor/ alliteration/onomatopoeia internal/end rhyme) | The student includes **all** poetic devices | The student includes **at least two** poetic device**.** | The student includes **one or less** any poetic devices. |
| **Story Elements** (characters/setting/conflict /climax/resolution) | The student includes **all** elements of the story; showed **in-depth** understanding of the story in detail. | The student includes **most** of the elementsof the story; showed **some** understanding of the story and some details. | The student includes **some** components of the story; **Developing** understanding of the story. |
| **Tone** | The student keeps the same tone as the short story. |  | The student does not keep the same tone as the short story. |

**Total points: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/ 12**

**The Dinner Party**   
by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_