

Title - denotation (dictionary definition) means three of something.

- connotations:
- three people playing music together
 - three people in harmony with one another
 - the three kings/wise men from the Nativity story.

'Trio', by Edwin Morgan

Slightly grim opening line

1 Coming up Buchanan Street, quickly, on a sharp evening

* Realistic details

2 a young man and two girls, under the Christmas lights -

* Present tense makes us feel as though we're witnessing events with the speaker.

3 The young man carries a new guitar in his arms,

each of the three carrying something precious

4 the girl on the inside carries a very young baby,

modern update of three wise men and the star.

5 and the girl on the outside carries a chihuahua.

6 And the three of them are laughing, their breath rises

7 in a cloud of happiness, and as they pass

metaphor: suggests togetherness because it joins their breath together.

8 the boy says, 'Wait till he sees this but!'

Dialogue communicates enthusiasm and the grammatically wrong 'but' shows Glaswegian dialect.

9 The chihuahua has a tiny Royal Stewart tartan coat like a teapot-

both baby and chihuahua are protected and cared for

holder, simile: light-hearted and continues the hopeful mood.

10 the baby in its white shawl is all bright eyes and mouth like favours

in a fresh sweet cake, simile: both are unambiguously good and pleasant.

Chihuahua, baby, and dog are all fragile but safe.

11 the guitar swells out under its milky plastic cover, tied at the neck

with silver tinsel tape and a brisk sprig of mistletoe.

9, 10, 11 are the longest lines in the poem - Morgan wants to show that love, happiness, and generosity should not be restricted.

allusion to the Greek myth of Orpheus - / Orphan is saying that music has great power to raise people's hearts.

12 Orphean sprig! Melting baby! Warm chihuahua! - Punctuation - exclamation marks make it seem as if poet is shouting with happiness.

13 The vale of tears is powerless before you.

allusion: in the Bible, the vale (valley) of tears is life. Jesus is meant to be the only thing which can help.
14 Christ is born, or is not born, you
uncertainty

15 put paid to fate, it abdicates
word choice: abdicates means to choose to step down as King or queen; fate is choosing to step down in the face of the happy three.
and personification
under the Christmas lights.

metaphor

16 Monsters of the year

17 go blank, are scattered back,

18 can't bear this march of three.

The baby, sprig, and dog are able to push back and defeat the 'Monsters' of the year.

Parenthesis closed from line 2. The parenthesis shows how short the sight of the family is, and positions them as something rare and precious.

19 - And the three have passed, vanished in the crowd

20 (yet not vanished, for in their arms they wind

contradiction

21 the life of men and beasts, and music,

22 laughter ringing them round like a guard)

simile: it protects them

23 at the end of this winter's day.

bracketed parenthesis explain how, in a metaphorical sense, they have not vanished.

Final line returns to the slightly grim, sad detail of it being winter.