**Plenty**

[Kevin Connolly](https://www.poetryinvoice.com/poems/poets/kevin-connolly)

The sky, lit up like a question or

an applause meter, is beautiful

like everything else today: the leaves

in the gutters, salt stains on shoes,

the girl at the IGA who looks just like

Julie Delpy, but you don’t tell her —

she’s too young to get the reference and

coming from you it’ll just seem creepy.

So much beauty today you can’t find

room for it, closets already filled

with beautiful trees and smells and

glances and clever turns of phrase.

Behind the sky there’s a storm

on the way, which, with your luck,

will be a beautiful storm — dark

clouds beautiful as they arguably are,

the rain beautiful as it always is —

even lightning can be beautiful in a

scary kind of way (there’s a word

for that, but let’s forget it for the moment).

And maybe the sun will hang in long

enough to light up a few raindrops —

like jewels or glass or those bright beads

girls put between the letters on the

bracelets that spell out their beautiful names —

Skye or Miranda or Verandah — which isn’t

even a name, although it is a word

we use to call things what they are,

and would be a pleasant place to sit

and watch the beautiful sky, beautiful

storm, the people with their beautiful

names walking toward the lake

in lovely clothing saying unpleasant

things over the phone about the people

they work with, all of it just adding to the

mother lode, the *surfeit* of beauty,

which on this day is just a fancy way

of saying lots, too much, skidloads, plenty.

1. This poem has a strong voice running through it. How would you describe the speaker’s mood?
2. Look at some of the more unexpected things the speaker in the poem finds beautiful, like leaves in the gutter or salt stains on shoes. Why are these details more interesting than a more obvious example of beauty, like flowers, would be?
3. What is the effect of the poet’s use of similes that offer more than one comparison of an image, such as “the sky, lit up like a question or / an applause meter” or “raindrops / like jewels or glass or those bright beads / girls put between the letters of the / bracelets that spell out their beautiful names”? How does this technique add to the overall feeling of the poem?
4. What actually happens in this poem? What do you know about the speaker’s life?
5. If you were reciting this poem, would you pause after some of the jokes to give the audience time to laugh? What tone would you use? Where would you slow down or speed up?
6. The poem follows the speaker moving through space (down the street, into the grocery store, then back outside looking at the sky) and through the speaker’s associative thought patterns (jumping from thinking of the sky to thinking of the name Skye; from thinking of the name Miranda to thinking of the word verandah). Write a poem in which you try to capture the way your own mind makes connections between seemingly unrelated things and try to maintain a consistent mood throughout.