**I Was Reading a Scientific Article**

by [Margaret Atwood](https://www.writersalmanac.org/index.html%3Fp=325.html)

They have photographed the brain  
and here is the picture, it is full of  
branches as I always suspected,

each time you arrive the electricity  
of seeing you is a huge  
tree lumbering through my skull, the roots waving.

It is an earth, its fibres wrap  
things buried, your forgotten words  
are graved in my head, an intricate

red blue and pink prehensile chemistry  
veined like a leaf  
network, or is it a seascape  
with corals and shining tentacles.

I touch you, I am created in you  
somewhere as a complex  
filament of light

You rest on me and my shoulder holds

your heavy unbelievable  
skull, crowded with radiant  
suns, a new planet, the people  
submerged in you, a lost civilization  
I can never excavate:

my hands trace the contours of a total  
universe, its different  
colours, flowers, its undiscovered  
animals, violent or serene

its other air  
its claws

its paradise rivers

### **Guiding question**

How does the poet use symbols to convey the central idea?

Discuss the relationship between the speaker and the other person in the poem