

At that cold Chicago show)
That drop came out of the cloud by night, 25
And a zombie made from the girl of snow.

Under her spell, seduced were men until succumbed –
For time no longer ticks too slow,
For flesh a meal makes when blood flows
– They followed eyes as grey as that killer cloud, 30
At that cold Chicago show,
So did that ground grab back just as once before,
When she sat like snow while time ticked slow.

Now hearts with no beats keep her dancing.
No rhythm will revive all of those 35
Who watched without helping that girl on that cold night,
Forever to that show she will go.
Whoever would have thought that the woman who swayed
Would never get the chance to say she didn't stay
While she danced and sang to songs she knows 40
At that cold Chicago show.

“Annabel Lee” and “Chicago Show”: A Comparison

The romantic poetry of Edgar Allan Poe has preserved its presence in American literature for generations. One famous poem written by Poe in 1849 is “Annabel Lee.” Its incredibly unique meter, rhyme scheme, and poetic devices make it playful to the ear and fun to read out loud while it tells the tragic tale of Annabel Lee. In this paper, I will walk you through my own rendition of “Annabel Lee” that I’ve named “Chicago Snow.” Here I will explain the differences between my poem and Poe’s, focusing on the same unique attributes that give “Annabel Lee” life.

As mentioned, “Annabel Lee” has a meter that draws the reader in with its sing-song rhythm. In the entire poem of “Annabel Lee,” the meter is all over the place. This was difficult to figure out alone, so I turned to Annisa, a blogger who focuses on literary techniques, for help figuring out the meter. Once I saw how Annisa broke down the first two stanzas, I was able to see and decide for myself what the rest of the poem’s meter is. I found that this poem uses iambic and anapestic feet, as discussed in class. The actual meter almost consistently goes back and forth between tetrameter and trimeter, breaking away from this after line 23, which is actually pentameter. In lines 26, 28-29, 31, and 39, Poe abandons the tetrameter-trimeter rhythm he has. The way the iambic and anapestic feet play with each other creates firm ground to play with meter in my own poem. While writing “Chicago Show,” I found myself constantly going back and forth to check if Poe had broken his meter so that I could assess how to continue my own poem. Though I wanted to stay as true as possible to his meter, mine slightly differs in places I needed more room to tell a story. I followed the same iambic and anapestic feet in tetrameter and trimeter. I played around with meter and even borrowed Poe’s pentameter in line 23. The meter of “Annabel Lee” is what brings the poem to life. Without it, the poem would be hard to replicate. I thoroughly enjoyed mirroring the meter in my own poem.

Edgar Allan Poe's rhyme scheme in "Annabel Lee" helps give a lively feel to the poem that keeps the reader wanting to read more. I was so inspired by this that in "Chicago Show," I tried to fit in as many rhymes as possible. In "Annabel Lee," there is a distinct rhyme scheme where almost every second line rhymes. Each stanza has a unique rhyme flow to it where lines used at the beginning of the poem rhyme with lines towards the end. I tried my best to copy this rhyme scheme because I feel like rhymes are always important to a poem that you want to sound nice when you read it out loud. The end words of each line in "Chicago Show" are a bit more inconsistent in rhyming than the rhymes I have woven into each line. Many lines in my poem have internal rhymes that help keep the flow of the poem alive, even after parts that don't flow too well. "When she sat like snow when time ticked slow" (l. 33, "Chicago Show") is a good example of this. In the entire stanza, I have words that don't really flow too nicely to show through language that eating flesh is not a beautiful thing. By putting this last line where "snow" and "slow" rhyme so nicely, it reminds the reader that they are reading a poem with a rhyme scheme that can be used many ways.

Repetition is the most prominent poetic device of "Annabel Lee." The actual name Annabel Lee is repeated in Poe's poem seven times. Each time the phrase around her name is slightly altered, but the reader does not get confused because the name is never changed. In "Chicago Show," this is not the case. I broke the poem down into phrases. Every time Annabel Lee is mentioned, her name is not broken up. When I wrote my phrase about slow time to mirror the repeating quality of "Annabel Lee," I had to alter it each time. However, I didn't just randomly stick in words that didn't repeat; I chose to repeat the words "time" and "slow." I did this because it was nearly impossible to tell the story without altering the phrase. I am very pleased with the result of this though because the reader is not given that repetition to fall back on; you have to figure out how or why the time is slow each time. The phrase "In a kingdom by the sea" is repeated five times, each without a single alteration to the phrase. In my poem, the

phrase I chose to mirror Poe's is "At that Chicago show" and is repeated seven times. I repeated it in line 31 where Poe has written "Nor the demons down under the sea" (l. 31, "Annabel Lee"). For my poem, there was no other line that fit in. I brought that phrase back because I was no longer using it to paint a scene. Instead it was the area the woman brings her victims to which is also where she died.

I really liked writing "Chicago Show." It's one of my favorite poems that I've written. Effort is not something that I am particularly filled with, but the amount of effort I put into writing this poem was far greater than effort *required* to study and write for other classes. I am very proud of this poem, even though it will probably just sit in a file deep within the depths of the hard drive on my laptop. My favorite part about writing "Chicago Show" was that I got to tell a story that left out a lot of detail. I like to leave a lot of determination up to my reader, and this story I've chosen to tell definitely allows to reader to choose their own adventure based on the information I've given them. Edgar Allan Poe has always been a model poet to me, so being able to replicate my absolute favorite poem by him is a blessing in itself.

Bibliography

Annisa. "Annabel Lee: Rhythm and Meter." Annwdyf. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Dec. 2016.

<<http://annwdyf.blogspot.com/p/annabel-lee-rhythm-and-meter.html>>.