

Date 4 / 18 PV Log: (circle one) Poem / Movie / Picture / LyricTitle "Riptide"Author / Director / Vance Joy

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

My friend Marie from St. Francis showed me this song, claiming that it was her all time favorite song that she could listen to over and over again.

Content / CD / Summary / Precis (Say? "Plot? Setting/Situation? Key lines/phrases scenes, etc?)

"Riptide" is essentially a love story. It is about a guy, the speaker, who has conquered all of his fears, such as "dentists and the dark" and "pretty girls and starting conversations," but now he has such a great love for someone that nothing can hold him back. Nevertheless, the girl he loves starts going to the "dark side," but he still wants to be her "left hand man." Even though he knows the relationship may be going downhill as he sings, "I got a lump in my throat because / You're gonna sing the words wrong," he wants the relationship to persist because he knows he gave it his all to happen in the first place.

Content / CM / Meaning? / Theme(s)?

"Riptide" revolves around the theme of conquering one's fears and pursuing one's dreams and aspirations. Before the speaker entered into a loving relationship with a woman, he was afraid of some of the most insignificant things, such as the dentist and the dark, but he realized that life is too short to worry about such things when there are great things in life awaiting him. The speaker comes out of his shell and opens up, making accessible to him the great possibilities of the world, such as genuine relationships. Unfortunately, when the speaker opens up, his relationship takes a turn for the worst, but he still dedicates himself to the woman of his dreams, as he is there for her no matter how far she goes into the dark side. He experiences the heartbreak and terror of the complex world around him, as his letting go has exposed him to uncertainty and ambiguity.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

Riptide is an indie folk, indie pop song, a genre that has progressively gained its foothold in popular culture. In the song, the riptide symbolizes a division of ways of life. Before, the speaker was curled up and unexposed to the world because he was afraid to lose his innocence, but then, after he realized that growing was inevitable, he was shocked by the results. His lover's "sing[ing] the words wrong" symbolizes her divergence from the normal path, changing in a way that disillusiones the speaker.

Commentary (What do you want to say? Why like? Questions? Synthesis / Allusions-Connections / Relevance to personal experience, to literature, 20Q's? etc.)? "Poetic" Traits?

Although the story behind "Riptide" may seem quite cheesy and even artificial, I find the song to be quite poetic, especially considering it is one of the songs I can not stop listening to on a daily basis. The smooth and upbeat rhythm and melody of the song can always cheer me up, no matter what type of mood I am in. I don't even necessarily have to listen to the lyrics intently in order for the song to immediately bring me immense joy, for the musical aspects of the song are that uplifting. The song clearly relates to both Margaret Atwood's "You Begin" as well as J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*. First and foremost, the speaker of the song starts out in sort of a naive and unaware state, oblivious to the world and all of its problems because he is held back by so many fears. Similarly to Holden Caulfield, the speaker at first is afraid to move on, to grow up and to face his fears. Eventually, however, he realizes the potential greatness of the world and everything beyond the barriers that are holding him back from living. He throws himself into the world full force by conquering his fears but ultimately to his dismay. He becomes upset because the world around him does not seem to be as great as he thought and the colors begin to smudge like in "You Begin," especially because the girl he gave it all for is slowly changing for the worse before his eyes. The lyrics to this song are poetic because they, unlike Holden Caulfield himself, accept the fact that growing up and losing one's innocence is inevitable. Rather than trying to resist change and an entrance into the ambiguity of the world, the song advocates for trying to heal the corruption in society, such as when the speaker stands by his deteriorating lover no matter what, because that is the best that humans can do under the circumstances.

over (do not mix logs; e.g., no poem log in front, and movie log on back)

