

Date 2 / 11 PV Log: (circle one) Poem / Movie / Picture / Lyric

Title "Gone from My Sight"

Author / Director / Henry Van Dyke

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

I was given this poem by Mr. Shakely to analyze and compare with "Around the Bend" for homework. I found the poem on a website known as "The Ribbon."

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

"Gone from My Sight" is about a person watching a beautiful and elegant ship, sailing from a port out into the blue ocean. The speaker observes the ship "until, at length, she hangs like a speck / of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other." The speaker, of course, becomes somewhat depressed as the ship's beauty diminishes into seemingly nothing; however, he or she then comes to realize that "her [the ship] diminished size is in me -- not in her." The ship may disappear from the speaker, but it is arriving at another port in some entirely different country containing people with "voices / ready to take up the glad shout, 'Here she comes!'" The speaker then relates this whole entire circumstance to death.

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

"Gone from My Sight" very clearly differentiates what the eye physically sees and what the brain can abstractly and theoretically imagine. Even though the speaker concretely sees a ship sailing off and leaving his or her sight, it does not necessarily mean that the ship is truly gone. In fact, the ship still exists and brings much joy to people awaiting it at another port. Much like death, people only discuss transformation and change from their own point of view, from what they can tangibly see and observe, rather than imagining all of the other possible results that may not be quite so evident. Death, for example, brings about immense grief and sadness, as if it is the end, but perhaps a life after death, a rebirth into eternity, exists free from matter and thus hidden from our observation. This, of course, can only be imagined, until we experience death ourselves.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

"Gone from My Sight" is written from a first person point of view, as he or she contemplates various things about the seen and the imaginary. The poem is broken up into 6 stanzas each with a random, rather than set number of lines, and it appears to be written in free verse because there is no specific rhyme scheme or meter present in the poem. The ship sailing from plain sight across a threshold into seemingly nothingness symbolizes death in that it can come on quickly and unexpectedly, unique to the person experiencing it. Nevertheless, the boat arriving at another location seems to suggest that some sort of heaven or after life does exist.

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

"Gone from My Sight" is quite a comforting and consoling poem during times of sorrow and despair, especially during the loss of a close relative or loved one. Death can bring about sudden and unexpected change, a mystery unique to each and every person, and that is why death is so feared and dreaded. It can completely alter people's daily lifestyles, leaving them unsure of what to do and how to proceed in their lives. In order to compensate for this uncertainty, people often turn to dire, artificial mechanisms to cope with their grieving, adversely affecting their relationships with others and themselves. Nevertheless, this poem seems to give hope that people, after they die, are well off or even better off, as they are essentially born again into a life of eternity with other friends, family members, and loved ones who have past. The message that this poem relays is poetic and somewhat soothing and relieving from all of the stress and anxiety over the inevitable end, namely, death, because it seems to suggest that a beauty of a person's existence never fades away, rather, it is welcomed with open arms into a perpetuating existence. This, then, makes death something not to fear, a poetic impetus for living life to the fullest. Death is ultimately the number one inhibition on the expansion and development of humankind, and so it is poetic knowing that death may not be the end after all, and that there is a purpose to our existence.

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