

"I Have Dreamed" from The King and I by Oscar and Hammerstein and sung by the late Nancy LaMott displays verb shifts that animate what is said drawing the listener (or reader) in.

The song is sung by lovers, Lun Tha and Tuptim. Lun Tha is an emissary of the court of Burma who presents Tuptim, a peasant girl, as a gift to the King from the prince of Burma. Since Tuptim is now a wife of the King, she and Lun Tha must meet secretly. They sing "I Have Dreamed" to each other.

Oscar and Hammerstein could have chosen either *dreamed* or *dreamt* as their predicate verb. According to Fowler, "[f]or the pa.t. [past tense] and pa.apple [past participle] both *dreamt* and *dreamed* are used; ... *Dreamed*, esp. as the pa.t. form, tends to be used for emphasis and in poetry. ...*dreamt* appears to be somewhat more common in BrE [British English] than in AmE [American English]" (p. 231). Pam Peters notes that "[b]oth spellings are in use for the past forms of *dream*, but **dreamed** is far more common in the US..." (p. 165).

Lun Tha sings:

*I have dreamed that your arms are lovely,  
I have dreamed what a joy you'll be.  
I have dreamed every word you whisper.  
When you're close,  
Close to me.  
How you look in the glow of evening  
I have dreamed and enjoyed the view.*

*In these dreams I've loved you so  
That by now I think I know  
What it's like to be loved by you,  
I will love being loved by you.*

Tuptim sings:

*Alone and awake I've looked at the stars,  
The same that smile on you;  
And time and again I've thought all the things T(sic)  
hat you were thinking too.*

*I have dreamed that your arms are lovely,  
I have dreamed what a joy you'll be.  
I have dreamed every word you whisper.  
When you're close,  
Close to me.  
How you look in the glow of evening  
I have dreamed and enjoyed the view.*

*In these dreams I've loved you so  
That by now I think I know.*

Both Lun Tha and Tuptim sing:

*What it's like to be loved by you.  
I will love being loved by you.*

As we listen to the lyrics (or read them) we become aware of the weaving of daydreaming, thoughts and feelings of Lun Tha and Tuptim by the movement of the verbs and verbals (gerunds, infinitives, and participles). Tufte writes that verbs and verbals both create movement and describe as an adjective would describe. *Have dreamed* is present perfect tense. When *have dreamed*, which denotes a recently completed action, is followed by present and future *to be* verbals its action continues into the present and into the future. Oscar and Hammerstein use verbals as adjectives in phrases like *arms are lovely, a joy you'll be* and *every word you whisper* so that we get a clear sense of the feelings between Lun Tha and Tuptim. Verbs and verbals are used most effectively as adjectives in the phrases *alone and awake I've looked at the stars, the same that smile on you*. The action of looking *alone and awake* gazing at the stars which are smiling is skillfully descriptive.

Switches from the present *When you're close, Close to me* to the past in the following phrases creates movement and further vividly describes feelings: *look in the glow of evening* and *enjoyed the view*.

The lyrics also create movement in the way they describe thoughts in the past, present and future – *dreamed* is the least certain, *I've loved you so* is more certain, *by now I think I know* is even more certain, and *I will love being loved by you* is most certain.

#### Works Cited

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