

Nothing in this world is absolute except for death, yet it is human nature to not easily accept. "Remember" by Christina Rossetti and "The Cross of Snow" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow address the complex overarching thematic idea of death, grief, and remembrance, but from different perspectives. In "Remember," the speaker wishes for her lover to remember her no matter what, but eventually acknowledges that it is better to let go and be pain-free rather than remember and have her lover be sad all the time. In contrast, "The Cross of Snow" depicts a speaker who refuses to let go and as a result, has grief as his constant silent partner. Through literary techniques such as structure, tone, and figurative language, both poems illustrate their different outlooks on death and the grieving process.

Both "Remember" and "The Cross of Snow" are Petrarchan Sonnets, which are in general associated with love poetry. Both poems reflect on the death of a loved one, thus making the grief profound. Furthermore, the first octet in both poems has a rhyme scheme of ABBA/ABBA, where the sentences rhyme with each other, demonstrating the sense of attachment felt by both speakers of the poems. In "Remember" the speaker wants her lover to never forget her, while in "The Cross of Snow" the octet demonstrates how the speaker refuses to let go by remaining attached to his dead lover. In both poems, the beginning of the sestet is where the volta occurs and from this point forward, there is no rigid rhyme scheme. At this point, in both poems, the reader sees a shift in the speaker's thoughts. The rhyme scheme for "Remember" in the sestet is CDD/ECE where the rhymes are not so closely attached. At this point, by saying "Yet," the speaker has shifted from implying that her lover remembers her long after death; she realizes that if remembering her will make her lover sad,

then it is better that the lover forgets her and be happy: "Better by far you should forget and smile/ Than that you should remember and be sad." In "The Cross of Snow," the rhyme scheme for the sestet is CDE/CDE. At this point, the speaker has shifted his thoughts from the memory of his lover to his own internal thoughts of loss of happiness in life. A rhyme scheme still exists in the sestet, further demonstrating speaker's attachment for his long dead lover.

Furthermore, the speaker's use of tone in each poem insinuates how grief and death should be handled. In the first octet of "Remember," the repetition of the word "remember" and "gone away" sets the tone as beseeching and selfish. The speaker wants her lover to remember her after she dies because that is how she will continue to live even after she dies as she implores that he "Remember me when I am gone away" and "when you can no more hold me by the hand." However, with the sestet, the tone shifts to that of acceptance as the speaker mentions the word "forget" for the first time and as she lets her lover know that it is "Better by far you should forget and smile/ Than that you should remember and be sad." The speaker is no more selfish in her thoughts of staying eternal even after death even if only through memories. The speaker thinks of what would be best for her lover rather than herself. The shift in tone demonstrates how one should let go of death and grief and move on. In comparison, the first octet of "The Cross of Snow" demonstrates a tone of reminiscence and admiration as the speaker mourns the loss of his lover through diction such as "long, sleepless watches of the night/ the face of one long dead/ looks at me from the wall." The speaker sets the tone

of admiration describing his lover as angelic and divine through images such as a "halo of pale light," a "gentle face," "the legend of a life more benedict," and a "soul more white." He also describes her as pure by utilizing the color white, which is representative of purity. However, in the sestet, the tone shifts to that of eternal love and longing through "These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes/ And seasons, changeless since the day she died." Seasons come and go, but nothing changes for the speaker as he has emotionally stopped living life since her death, demonstrating the speaker's unwavering decision to cling on to grief and not let go.

Additionally, both poems utilize figurative language as they address death, grief, and moving forward. In "Remember," the euphemism of "Gone far away into the silent land" metaphorically refers to death by using the biblical reference to the "silent land" as death. The speaker implies that once she is dead, she can only come back as a memory, therefore, begging her lover to remember her. The poem itself is an apostrophe as the speaker is directly speaking to her lover, demonstrating a high level of intimacy which gives her the right to implore that she be remembered after death, yet at the same time consoling her lover that it is okay if she is forgotten as his happiness is all that matters ultimately. The use of enjambment in lines five and six as well as in lines seven and eight heightens the speaker's notion that life will continue after death and her only request is that she be remembered, but that her lover move on in life and not live in remorse. In contrast, "The Cross of Snow" utilizes symbolism and metaphors to demonstrate how the speaker refuses to move on from the grief associated with his wife's death. The octet of the sonnet describes the

longing that the speaker feels for his lover through "sleepless watches of the night" as he stares at the picture of his lover on the wall that invigorates divinity as it "casts a halo of pale light." The usage of hyperbole in "Never through martyrdom of fire was led /... / The legend of a life more benedict" describes the exaggerated depths to which the speaker loved as he stands firm in the belief that no one is purer and more blessed than his lover. The sestet compares an actual cross of snow on a "mountain in the distant West" to the hypothetical cross that the speaker wears "upon my breast," which is symbolic of the icy and cold pain that grief carries in his heart constantly. The cross also alludes to Jesus' pain during his crucifixion and likewise how the speaker feels that same deep pain in his heart at the loss of his lover. The image of "sun-defying" implies snow that does not melt, similar to how the pain the speaker feels in his heart does not go away even with the "changing scenes / And seasons, changeless since the day she died."

Death is the only absolute certainty in life; how people grieve and handle it is what constantly changes. Both Rossetti and Longfellow explore the grieving process for death through literary devices such as structure, tone, and figurative language. While "Remember" explores the idea of staying eternally alive through memories, "The Cross of Snow" explores the deep pain that is self-inflicted when refusing to acknowledge death and simply let go. Life is a continuous circle, where there is a new beginning with every end.

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Amazing
Work !!