
Mystery And Forgetfulness In Crane And Collins' Poetry

With its mysterious power, forgetfulness manages to evade the lives of each individual. Forgetfulness possesses the capability to erase the horrid past and to annihilate cherished memories. It can elicit feelings of ecstasy or engender hopelessness. As an abstract idea, forgetfulness defies standard definitions; However, it can be compared to concrete concepts. By choosing memorable words, painting striking images, and using clever comparisons, Crane and Collins depict contrasting perspectives of forgetfulness through their poems.

In Crane's poem, the speaker feels awed by the phenomenon of forgetfulness, praising its beauty and strength through the usage of artful diction, vivid imagery, and figurative language. By meticulously choosing diction, Crane emphasizes the liberty of forgetfulness in his poetry. Rather than becoming a handicap, forgetfulness serves to liberate the soul, which the speaker captures through the usage of words such as "freed", "wanders", and "outspread". Forgetfulness allows memories to "coast the wind unwearingly" and to vanish into oblivion. Eventually, forgetfulness consumes everything, until one can only "remember much forgetfulness." Additionally, Crane utilizes imagery to describe the concept of forgetfulness. "Like a song" that gradually floats away into thin air, forgetfulness allows its victim to be "freed from beat and measure," from expectations and worries. It is also "an old house in the forest,--or a child," consisting of remnants of the beautiful past. Memories are also like the "rain at night," eclipsed and forgotten by the glory of the morning sunrise. Crane also depicts forgetfulness through the use of figurative language, claiming that it possesses the ability to "stun the sybil into prophesy." Forgetfulness is a dominating power, a power that even the Gods cannot become immune to. Forgetfulness envelops the mind and the soul, eventually burying the Gods from people's memory.

Meanwhile, Collins utilized depressing diction, negative imagery, and creative metaphors to portray the idea of forgetfulness in his poem. Forgetfulness induces the sense that "something else is slipping away," perhaps joyful memories, youthfulness, or control. By utilizing words such as "struggling" and "oblivion", Collins depicts the desperation associated with forgetfulness. Furthermore, forgetfulness attacks and overwhelms its victims, preventing memories from "lurking" in some obscure corner of the brain. Collins also uses bleak imagery to depict forgetfulness in his poem. At first, forgetfulness is the failure to recollect trivial details such as "the name of an author" and gradually progresses until the "entire novel" becomes an obscure oblivion. Soon, forgetfulness results in the inability to swim or to even ride a bike. The image of losing one's mind and eventually one's independence gives forgetfulness a negative connotation. Additionally, forgetfulness evokes a sense of hopelessness from its victims. Through the usage of figurative language, the speaker portrays the migration of memories to the "southern hemisphere of the brain," similar to the elderly who depart from their homes in search of a warmer climate in the south, implying that older people often become victims of forgetfulness. Furthermore, kissing "the names of the nine Muses goodbye and watching the quadratic equation pack its bag" mimics departure and separation from a loved one. The speaker also equates forgetfulness to memories "floating down a dark mythological river," providing a sense of dreariness.

Both poems emphasize that forgetfulness is the natural repercussion of time. However, Crane

and Collins view the concept of forgetfulness from different perspectives. Through the use of selective words, powerful imagery, and ambiguous comparisons, Collins portrays forgetfulness as an inconvenient disadvantage while Crane depicts forgetfulness as powerful phenomenon. Although these poems contain obscure messages, they properly convey the abstract concept of forgetfulness. Whether forgetfulness engenders desperation or hope, it remains as a powerful force that eventually touches all human lives.

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