THE MEDIEVAL BALLAD

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| It was in and about the Martinmas time, When the green leaves were a-falling, That Sir John Graeme, in the West country, Fell in love with Barbara Allen.  | November 11 |
| He sent his men down through the town To the place where she was dwelling: "O haste and come to my master dear, Gin ye be Barbara Allen."  | living hurry up if you are |
| O hooly, hooly rose she up, To the place where he was lying, And when she drew the curtain by' "Young man, I think you're dying."  | slowly |
| "O it's I'm sick, and very, very sick, And it's a' for Barbara Allen;" "O the better for me you shall never be, Though your heart's blood were a spilling."  | all |
| "O dinna ye mind, young man," she said, "When the red wine ye were filling, That ye made the healths gae round and round, And slighted Barbara Allen?"  | don't you remember drank some toasts; go upset |
| He turned his face unto the wall, And death was with him dealing; "Adieu, adieu, my dear friends all, And be kind to Barbara Allen."  | doing business goodbye |

 *Bonny Barbara Allen*- Anonymous

And slowly, slowly raise she up,

And slowly, slowly left him.

And sighing said, she could not stay,

Since death of life had reft’ him.

She had not gane a mile but twa,

When she heard the dead-bell geid,

It cry’d, Woe to Barbara Allen.

ANALYSIS

Analisi titolo

Reading the title we can understand only that Barbata Allen is the protagonist of the poem. Near the noun there is an adjective which could characterize her.

Analisi layout

Bonny Barbara Allen is a ballad. Ballads were anonymus and sometimes were with accompaniment or dance. Initially this phoem was trasmitted orally and written down netween the 13th and 14th centuries. The most important features of the ballad are:

* Short stanzas
* Repetition of word or lines (ex.: vv. 9 o **holly, holly** rose up)
* Mixure of dialogue and narration
* Theme of supernatural, love, war, domestic tragedy, outlawtry
* Diffucult language and use of dialect form

The ballad is composed of 8 stanzas of 4 lines. The rhyme scheme is not regular, so it varies throughout the poem. The poem also uses approximate instead of exact rhyme. The B rhyme is repeated most often and is representative of the –ing words used before.

 For the first three stanzas, it is: ABCD EBFD GBHB

Unknown words

* Was dwelling= abitava
* Haste= affrettarsi
* Hooly= lentamente
* To rose= alzarsi
* Lying= sdraiato
* Sick= indisposto
* Spill= perdita, versamento
* To raise= alzarsi
* Sighing= sospirare
* Jow= rintocco
* Woe= dolore

Analisi denotativa

This ballad tells of a tragic love story between John and Barbara, who loved each other but were united only after death.

INTERPRETATION OF THE POEM

The poem is about unrequited love. Sir John Graeme falls in love with Barbara Allan. He is so lovesick that he is bound to his deathbed. When Barbara comes to visit her ailing lover, she reminds him that he slighted her in front of others at a local tavern. Than John say goodbyes to alla his friends and dies, then she feels guilty. After that Barbara heard the dead -bell ringing and starts to cry.

The message might be that one doesn’t need to take love for granted, or it might not be there when it is wanted.

The theme of this ballad is the tragic love. The most important semantic levels are love and death ,indeed there are a lot of words that refer to these groups (like: love/ death/dead/ sick) . The reader with this poem realizes that when you miss a person you understand the real importance of him: Barbara didn’t love John but after his death she regrets him.

Analisi connotativa

There are different figure of speech:

* Personification:

The personication is a trope or figure of speech in which an inamate object or abstraction is given human qualities or abilities.

Death is personified in lines 22 and 28 as one that deprives the speaker Sir John Graeme of life and health. It is probably personified because it evokes in the reader an image of the Grim Reaper, a powerful force that comes at the end of one’s life to set Graeme’s ―dead-bell ringing‖ (31). The dead bell itself is also personified as crying out its woe to Barbara Allan. Use of the bell in this way makes it seem like a haunting voice that won’t let Miss Allan forget that she let her love die lonely and brokenhearted.

* Alliteration:

the repetition of the same or similar consonant sounds in words that are close together.

 In the 7 stanza there is an alliteration: And slowly, slowly raise she up,

 And slowly, slowly left him.

 And sighing said, she could not stay,

 Since death of life had reft’ him

* Repeated words and phrases:

These words are repeated for emphasis—hooly, sick, round, adieu, slowly, mother, and Barbara Allan. There is at least one repeated word/phrase per stanza, adding to the singsong quality of the ballad.

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* Dialect:

 Words such as ―dinna,‖ ―hooly,‖ and ―a spilling‖ give the Scottish accent and make the dialogue more real that if it were translated into modern English.

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* Use of –ing verbs:

In every stanza except the last, there is at least one –ing verb used. These verbs maintain a continuous flow among stanzas and help to keep the action moving throughout the ballad.