

A STORY ABOUT IMAGERY ON A T-BAR

T-bar is a poem that speaks mainly in imagery about a snowy day on the ski hill. It reflects one's imagination of being pulled up the hill by a mechanically operated lift, and skiing back down it. The person speaking was able to make a story out of the arches of the lift and many other things involved with the t-bar. It begins with a slight description of the machine using metaphors such as "twin automatons", meaning that the skiers are moving without individual action and being taken at the speed of the lift. The poem's tone consists of a rhyme scheme to show the continuously flowing movement of the t-bar.

The second line of the second stanza also has a metaphor, the poet used "incisions" to illustrate the indentations in the slope. It is here that he begins to show how the imagery works when "somnambulists" is employed. This gives the reader the idea of a dream instead of a simple lift up the mountain. We begin to think about sleepwalkers who stand and move without even thinking of it. To emphasize the dream, Page replaces ski poles by phantom poles, which gives the poem more of an unrealistic feeling to it. Time also becomes a theme in this stanza when we read about "slow monstrous jiggling time". This demonstrates the idea that every time a t-bar goes by an arch, it sounds like the ticking noise of a clock.

Time imagery continues in the third stanza when the author speaks of "gradients of eternity", which is referring to the never ending slope that is in the hands of an infinite time scheme. A new imagery theme is established as Page explores the way a pair can be

created when two people are put side to side on the t-bar. He says “Pass through successive arches, bride and groom” and “newly wed” (initiating the theme of marriage). The dream is brought back into prospective at the end of this stanza when the poet talks about a “recurring dream”. He mentions this after he developed the point of the repeating arches that pass by one after the other.

The time theme seems to continue throughout the poem in different forms (such as dreams and reality). In the fourth stanza it says that “the clocks are broken”, signifying that the reoccurring dream goes on forever as if time did not exist. This happens in between the arches in what the author calls the “zones of silence”. The lifeless dreamers now become blood brothers as they are both being covered by matching snowflakes and begin to look alike as they are coated in whiteness. The author called this snow a “haemophilic snow” because once it has begun it continues endlessly without stopping for a long time. Now comes the first mentioning of an end to the t-bar dream as the poet conveys the breaking of the summit. It is now time to come out of the dream and return to reality as would an insect becoming an imago (which is what Page says in the end of this stanza).

The couple which had been formed is now soon going to break as the end of the lift approaches. It is said that the sleeping bride will painfully leave the dream and suddenly become free. Meanwhile what was once the groom is now separated from her as he singles her out (or chooses her as she was on the t-bar with him). All this is described to be a painful and suffering experience and that “old wounds” are once again opened due to the disconnection of the couple. This gives us an idea of how strong and meaningful the ride was in a dream world of endless time. To give some sympathy to the readers after

such sorrow, Page ends off this stanza by saying that the couple is “not separated, but no longer one”, meaning that they are now two individuals. This relieves some of the sadness expressed in previous lines of the stanza, leaving the reader emotionally satisfied.

Time has once again become an issue in the last stanza as the old couple is no longer restricted by the tow of the lift. Another metaphor is used as the author is expressing the way in which the people are leaving the t-bar by being catapulted by a contracting “rubber band” (which in fact is the wire connecting the t-bar to the lift). It is said that these two people are thrown out into the snow, roughly in the same direction, or as the author says, in “tandem trajectory”. This leaves the two people to go back down the ski hill in whichever direction they desire, but makes a point that they will once again untie with someone at the bottom of the lift. The t-bar, now hard and slow, swings uncontrollably around the revolving wheel to go back down the hill, signifying a definite end to the story.

A lot of imagery was used in this poem, such as marriage, dreams and time, which all created a sort of story. The author purposely chose to include these as themes which would eventually lead to the end of the lift (or to the awakening of the dreamers and separation of the couple). I believe that this poem is a great piece of work, which might be irrelevant to the topic but perhaps should be said to show my recognition of the poet’s style. This consisted of the use of imagery, metaphors, themes and rhymes to show that it is a possibility to invent a story out of something so random and different from all other poetry topics. This implies that imagination was very important for Page to create such a poem, and it might not have been possible to do it without such creative imagery.