*Rose Petals*

Sophie Marshall

I looked up,

To see you goggling at me.

You were so handsome;

Inky hair and out of my league.

The streets were stained

With thousands of vibrant frames,

And hummed with overlapping tête-à-têtes,

Yet,

Our orbs managed to interlock.

I thought it was fate,

The reason we found each other.

You picked me up at six,

And lightly pressed your lips to mine.

Replenished my body with warmth,

From the toes up;

Like a hot, bubble bath,

Blotched with perfect pink rose petals of memories.

Eternity would never be enough with you.

Your eyes gleamed as the sun's rays penetrated them.

Chocolate stars for optics.

Velvet hands caressed my cheeks,

As you peeked deep into my gems,

Whispered, "I love you".

Cross my heart;

The world stopped.

Hesitantly,

I mumbled, "I love you too".

Hoax smile plastered my face.

The lying ate me from the inside out.

The cheating slashed my soul apart.

The fighting detonated me into shards of

Bloodied porcelain.

Too much.

Too long.

Hung on, until everything was gone.

Of you.

Of me.

*Was it worth it?*

Dubiety.

Possibly...

Nostalgia sets in on the corner where I first espied you.

Harking to my brain,

Heart drenched in blue;

*Did I ever truly love you?*

Suddenly you appear, again.

Like wine -- aged better with time.

Fate gains,

As our eyes embrace, one last time.

I may have loved you, almost,

But I will *always* love myself the most.

That's a verity.

My poem attempts to transport the reader into the persona of a young woman, and her contact with someone who she desires to believe is the “love of her life”. I chose to write my poem with sophisticated diction to portray that the woman has long moved on, and matured since the loss of her love. Moreover, I chose to scribe my poem with a subtle persevering tone, because I didn’t want my poem to be another sappy, romantic piece of literature about love. I wanted it to revolve around a woman thinking she lost the “love of her life”; however, in reality, her one, *true* love will always be herself. The poem is not meant to be narcissistic; it’s meant to fill the public with the insight that you should always love yourself first. At the end of the day, you’re all you have.

1. The first stanza is dedicated to the first moment when an individual detects someone they deem attractive; thus, visual imagery played a huge role. By referencing the color of a person’s hair or their surroundings, I was able to paint a picture for the audience; giving them a better understanding. Also, I included an off-key rhyme -- in some of my lines -- to give the poem a pleasant, but nervous feeling. Catching a glimpse of someone who could be your everything, one day, is soothing and nerve-racking at the same time; thus, the need for the gentle rhyme. Lastly, I chose to give the word “yet” its own line to give emphasis and create a pause in my stanza. The pause signified the instant a couple’s eyes intertwine -- the moment they hold their breath, and the world stops.
2. My second stanza is meant to signify the start of something new. I chose the subject of the first date and narrowed in on tactile imagery -- I wanted the reader to be able to feel almost everything the young woman was feeling. Furthermore, I used no rhyming and a jagged clause structure to symbolize the mousiness that overwhelms couples on the first date. Additionally, I utilized similes and alliteration for the main purpose of making the stanza memorable -- just like a first date should be. Ultimately, many of the diction choices, in the stanza, were concocted, because they sounded soft -- “s” and “b” words. Overall, this gave the stanza a tender, romantic feel.
3. This stanza, the third, has a lone purpose; setting up for a tone shift. The beginning of the stanza uses alleviating and subdued phrases -- velvet hands -- to represent the lovely beginning of the end. Then, I used counterfeit and melancholy diction to emphasize the way the woman felt, looking back at the situation -- she wasn’t ready for love, and she didn’t love him. Everything -- up to the last piece of dialogue -- is meant to be occurring in the past. The last line of the stanza is the woman glancing back, and comprehending how she actually felt. Overall, I depicted a scene using visual imagery and dialogue; this allowed the reader to thoroughly grasp the message I was trying to project. The memorandum being: when someone gets nostalgic about an incident that occurred in the past, they may look back and realize they never truly felt the way they believed they felt -- at the time of the affair.
4. My fourth stanza is the most grave of the assemblage; it manifests a change in tone for the persona. A handful of personification, metaphors, elegant diction, internal struggles, and simple sentences were applied to heighten the emotions of the persona. All of the literary devices -- along with visual imagery -- pushed for the public to sympathize with the young woman. Almost everyone has experienced some sort of heartbreak. During a heartbreak, a person may question themselves, encounter denial, or face confusion; however, when peeking back at a previous breakup, a human may be filled to the rim with acceptance and understanding. That’s what I tried to stimulate with the persona in the stanza.
5. From my perspective, the concluding stanza is the most inspiring and persevering of the bunch. This is because it zooms the reader, through time, to the moment when the couple reunites; following their gruesome parting of ways. Back where it all began; except, this time it’s different. They’ve both changed. It’s an awkward, yet pleasant encounter; hence, the rhyming of the final stanza. I took advantage of complex word choice, similes, visual imagery, and internal dialogue to convey the way the young woman felt. Although the persona is aching, she pushes through to discover her epiphany; now, she fathoms that she may have loved her previous partner, but there’s no doubt in her mind that she loves herself. In the end, it’s vital to love yourself. When times get grueling, it’s crucial to be aware that you will always have you. That’s a fact.