Analyzing Kidnap Poem By Nikki Giovanni

The “Kidnap poem“ is written by an African-American poet, Nikki Giovanni. The poem itself covers the theme of seducing or “wooing some” may call it, in dating relationships. Through the robust language of the free verse poem, Ms. Giovanni twist the extended metaphor with her use of incorrect punctuation, stanzas and rhyming elements and the diction of her words.

To start off, the first thing that is present or noticeable in this poem is the lack of proper punctuation or conventions in her poem. Although it may confuse the readers in interpreting or even reading the poem, it gives a much clearer image once the reader reflects it over multiple times; same with listening to works from Robert Schumann. Some convention errors include capitalization errors “jones beach, coney island“ lack of commas, “if I were a poet/ i’d kidnap you“ and lack of periods “yeah if I were a poet/ i’d kidnap you“. However there are no spelling errors found in the poem itself “ode you with my love song”.

The next thing noticeable is the robust design of the poem. In sight, the poem looked like a mess as if someone kicked the bucket while writing this. Although this poem is not a great example of concrete poetry, the design does play with the eye. The poem as stated earlier is a free verse and does not have a definite rhyme scheme (ABBCDEFGIEJCKCLMNC). There is no sign of a strict stanza form either, and each line in the poem vary greatly in length “ by a poet/ put you in my phrases and meter “.

The last thing we might cover is the use of violent words in creating a light-hearted mood. Some violent words include “ kidnap, wrap and dash”. However, her use of words creates a humorous image in mind “ blend into the beach “. For me, I think the whole poem is just an extended metaphor between love and kidnapping. The poet may fell deep in love and felt kidnapping the boy is the best way to make him hers. This gives a clearer image towards the theme of the poem “taking risk on love“.

To conclude this writing, Ms. Giovanni does a great job in opening my eye to the new style of poems that care less about grammar. Before, I tend to avoid these poems as they can be nonsense and it may destroy my image on the message of the poem itself. However, as usual, I was proven wrong on this day and I shall start to read with acceptance more than the stylistic features. The piece gives a “quirky“ image to what love might be; with Valentine’s Day just around the corner, I might need to accept any invitations to come. My summary on the piece, I shall say “ Frustrating at first, enjoyable at the end.”

Works Cited

1. Giovanni, Nikki “Kidnap poem” Holt McDougal literature edited by Janet Allen, Holt McDougal, Houghton Miffin Harcout, 2012