

BALLAD #3: THE UNQUIET GRAVE (XV century)



CHILD BALLAD #78	COLD BLOWS THE WIND (by Ween) - 1997
<p>1 'The wind doth blow today, my love, And a few small drops of rain; I never had but one true-love, In cold grave she was lain.</p>	<p>1 Cold blows the wind over my true love Cold blows the drops of rain I never had but one true love And in Camville he was slain</p>
<p>2 'I'll do as much for my true-love As any young man may; I'll sit and mourn all at her grave For a twelvemonth and a day.'</p>	<p>2 I'll do as much for my true love as any young girl may I'll sit and weep down by his grave for twelve month and one day</p>
<p>3 The twelvemonth and a day being up, The dead began to speak: 'Oh who sits weeping on my grave, And will not let me sleep?'</p>	<p>3 But when twelve months were come and gone This young man he arose What makes you weep down by my grave I can't take my repose</p>
<p>4 'Tis I, my love, sits on your grave, And will not let you sleep; For I crave one kiss of your clay-cold lips, And that is all I seek.'</p>	<p>4 One kiss, one kiss of your lily white lips, one kiss is all I crave One kiss, one kiss of your lily white lips and return back to your grave</p>
<p>5 'You crave one kiss of my clay-cold lips; But my breath smells earthy strong; If you have one kiss of my clay-cold lips, Your time will not be long.</p>	<p>5 My lips they are as cold as my clay My breath is heavy and strong If thou was to kiss my lily white lips Thy days would not be long</p>
<p>6 'Tis down in yonder garden green, Love, where we used to walk, The finest flower that ere was seen Is withered to a stalk.</p>	<p>6 Oh don't you remember the garden grove where we used to walk Pluck the finest flower of them all, twill wither to a stalk</p>
<p>7 'The stalk is withered dry, my love, So will our hearts decay; So make yourself content, my love, Till God calls you away.'</p>	<p>Go fetch me a nun from the dungeon deep And water from a stone And white milk from a maiden's breast, That babe ere never known</p> <p>Go dig me a grave both long, wide and deep as quickly as you may I'll lie down in it and take one sleep for twelve month and one day</p> <p>Cold blows the wind over my true love Cold blows the drops of rain I never had but one true love And in Camville he was slain</p> <p>I'll do as much for my true love as any young girl may I'll sit and weep down by his grave for twelve month and one day</p>

This is an English folk song in which a young man mourns his dead love too hard and too long and prevents her from obtaining peace. It is thought to date from 1400 and was collected in 1868 by Francis James Child, as Child Ballad number 78. One of the more common tunes used for the ballad is the same as that used for the English ballad "Dives and Lazarus" and the Irish pub favorite "Star of the County Down".

"The Unquiet Grave" is both a poem and a song. Intensely sad, and written in the first person singular, the mourner laments the love of his life sitting weeping at her graveside for a year and a day, at which point her ghost rises up and asks who will not allow her to sleep. He identifies himself and asks for "one kiss of your clay-cold lips." She tells him to put his grief behind him and enjoy the rest of his life "till God calls you away."

Like most traditional songs there are many variations, of the title as well as the lyrics in this case.



Probably the earliest recorded version is "Cold Blows The Wind" which was sung by Elizabeth Doidge, a nurse of Brentnor, and collected by Mrs Gibbons, the daughter of W.L.Trelawney, Bart, c1830. This version had the tune usually associated with "Childe The Hunter."

"The Unquiet Grave" has been recorded by many artists, including Joan Baez.

SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

- A. Analyze the emotions of the persona through the words and phrases used in the ballad.
- B. Distinguish a scene, character, moment, or event from one stanza of the ballad
- C. What do the following words mean?

Seraphs - Coveted - Kinsman - Dissever - Sepulchre

- D. Describe a place where you want to go to if you are in a date with your beloved.
- E. Now let's read the poem "Annabel Lee" by Edgar Allan Poe (1849)

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my Annabel Lee—
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of Heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in Heaven above
Nor the demons down under the sea
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea—
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

After Reading

1. Who was Annabel Lee?
2. What happened to Annabel Lee when her highborn kinsman came?
3. What could have happened to cause her death?
4. What are some key emotions that you picked up on or felt while reading the poem?
5. What specific lines or passages caused you to feel these emotions? Why?
6. What are the themes touched on by the poem?
7. Can we compare this poem to our precious ballad? Why?

...and now we can listen to the song!