

Poetry and Film

Taking a Closer Look at the Establishing Shot

1 Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.

--Emily Dickinson

3 The art of losing isn't hard to master;
so many things seem filled with the intent
to be lost that their loss is no disaster.

--Elizabeth Bishop

5 Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

--William Blake

7 The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our
powers;—
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

--William Wordsworth

9 Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and caldron bubble.
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake;

--William Shakespeare

11 I've known rivers:
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older
than the flow of human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

--Langston Hughes

2 I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of
stone
Stand in the desert. . . .

--Percy Bysshe Shelley

4 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;
--Edgar Allan Poe

6 When, in disgrace with fortune and men's
eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless
cries,
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
--William Shakespeare

8 When day comes, we ask ourselves:
Where can we find light
In this never-ending shade?
The loss we carry, a sea we must wade.
--Amanda Gorman

10 I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain—and back in rain.
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
--Robert Frost

12 My mother and I debate:
we could sell
the black walnut tree
to the lumberman,
and pay off the mortgage.

--Mary Oliver

A roll of the dice determines your fate!



Let's take an idea...

Losing someone you love can cause a deep hurt within, the pain, lasting and constant, becomes a steady presence like a slowly dripping water faucet.

Not bad, certainly a pretty insightful statement about the emotional pain of loss. But the poet's job is to take this shared feeling and try to present it in a certain, undeniable and identifiable truth. Here is the Greek poet Sappho working out this same idea but in poetic form.

*Pain penetrates me...
drop
by*

drop

The shot opens in darkness with a slight sound in the background, unrecognizable at first, but as it grows louder it sounds like a person breathing somewhat irregularly.



The breathing is replaced by the rhythmic sound of a heartbeat-like pattern done musically.

*Pain penetrates me...
drop
by*

This is disorienting creating uncertainty for the audience. I want this opening to have multiple possibilities. Is this the beginning or the end?



drop

The camera slowly pulls back and the light source which was blurred becomes clearer, it is a window. We are in the bathroom of a church. The view is of a graveyard. A white wedding dress hangs chaotically on a hook next to the window. We must wonder if the two are connected. We set a mysterious uncertain tone.

The screen goes to black and the theme music begins.

As the darkness gradually lightens we notice what appears to be an extreme close up of a sink with dark drops falling into it. The color of the drops is dark, could it be blood, or something else, massacara.

Poet's Tools

Sound
Word
Phrase / sentence
Structure

Film Maker's Tools

Frame
Shot
Sequence
Composition

Set Location and Tone

Paying attention to

Camera position
Angle
Props
Lighting
sound/music

Offer a Purpose for your choice (Why?)

Offer notes to the side of each element in your drawing of the establishing shot.
Refer to the example.
Rince. Repeat.