

Morgan Leider
Nathan Hershey

Loved to Death is a poem that tells the story of Herbert Hershey and Lily Leider. They loved each other... Well Hershey thought they loved each other anyways. There was a rumor that started going around their village. That rumor was about Lily and her secret sin that no one in the town seemed to know. It drove Hershey insane and when he went to ask Lily about it, she gave him no explanation and left him. That's when Hershey's love for her began to possess him. He was trapped inside his own heart and if he couldn't have Lily, no one could. He was willing to do whatever it takes to find her and punish her. He wanted her dead. One night he went into her room and killed her. Once she was dead, he couldn't move. Then police showed up and ended up taking him in. Hershey is telling this story from jail where he is going to spend the rest of his life.

I guess you could say that we didn't really have any poetic strategies when it came to writing this poem. Poem writing isn't my specialty so I just made it into a story, treating the stanzas as paragraphs. When we were brainstorming for this poem, we knew that we wanted two characters, but from there we didn't really have any idea where to go with it. Once we started picking out quotes and got started, the poem seemed to flow together.

To show the dark side of humanity, we created the character Herbert Hershey. He may have loved Lily, but he let rumors, that may/may not have been true, ruin that love. Even though they weren't together, he still loved her and when he realized that he couldn't have her, he didn't want anyone to have her. He killed the only love of his life. When he is standing in her bedroom, there was nothing but blackness. When he describes the blackness, the affect we were hoping to create is the blackness that started to overtake his soul. For him to be able to kill the love of his life, he had to be complete dark and morbid. At the end of our poem, we wanted our reader to understand that he was in jail, but the memory of Lily Leider still haunts him to this day.

I entered upon the subject
With direct simplicity
Which made the task easiest for both her and I
But her words were a mystery
At lengths we sat silent
She made no reply
And turned to leave the room

I was trapped in the saddest of all prisons
My own heart
For we loved with love
That was more than love
Then she changed herself into something awful
And she turned and left me

It's impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain
The thought came gently and stealthily
And it seemed long before it attained full appreciation
But once conceived, it haunted me day and night
The intensity of darkness seemed to oppress and stifle me
I knew I must not only punish Lily
But punish with impunity
It was Lily that dismasted me

That inscrutable love is chiefly what I hate
I was to wreck that hate upon her
I planned to chase her round Good Hope
And round the Horn
And round the Norway Maelstrom
And round Perdition's flames before I give her up
Death to Lily
God hunt me if I do not hunt Lily to her death

Now this is the point
You fancy me mad
Madmen know nothing
But you should have seen me!
You should have seen how wisely I proceeded
With what caution, with what foresight
With what dissimulation
I went to work!

Her room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness
The blackness of darkness supervened
All sensations appeared swallowed up in a mad rushing descent
As of the soul into Hades
The silence and stillness and night were the universe
The blackness of eternal night encompassed me

She shrieked once – once only
In an instant I dragged her to the floor
And pulled the heavy bed over her
I then smiled gaily
For there she lay
Shivering with the arms of death around her
There was then a long and obstinate silence

She was dead
I removed the bed
And examined the body
Yes, she was stone, stone dead
I placed my hand upon her heart
And held it there many minutes
There was no pulsation
She was stone dead
In Pace Requiescat!

I felt nothing
Yet dreaded to move a step
I cautiously moved forward
As the bell sounded the hour
There came a knocking at the street door
There entered three men
Three officers of the police

And now a full memory

Of the trial

Of the judges

Of the sable draperies

Of the sentences

Of the sickness

Of the swoon

Of Lily Leider