

THE SLEEPER – SCRIPT TREATMENT

"The atmosphere of the poem is dreamlike, otherworldly. Words such as *mystic*, *opiate*, *drowsily*, *slumber*, *wizard*, *ghosts*, and *shadows* reinforce the mood. The theme is transcendental love—that is, love for a woman so powerful that it extends into the afterlife in its concern for the well-being of the deceased woman's soul. "The Sleeper" is one of many Poe poems focusing on beautiful women who have died."

S1:

(N1 - reality) Male is looking at the moonlight through open window in a bedroom. Papers and pens on rustic desk. Paper on Male's hands. He opens the paper and starts reading silently. He goes over a black sheeted bed and kneels. He positions his hands in sign of prayer. Moonlight directed towards him. Fog emerges surrounding him. Sounds of water drops. (N3 – nightmare – bluish/greyish) Light blue / grey light in the scene. Water drops on a pale forehead – dropping through pale cheek – dropping from a hand hanging to floor.) Vapour + sounds of river/lake behind the Male in progress, intensifying as he turns away. (N2 – dreamlike- bright/mystical) Pan-Cut to idyllic forest with bright sun, river + a bit of fog, beautiful Female with white nightgown + rosemary etc on head + flowers over her body in sleeping position next to river. Male's VO: "Lady bright..." – Birds singing, sounds of nature. A subtle breeze. As we examine her sleeping, Male's V.O: "A conscious slumber you seem to take..." – Harsher wind on nature; trees, grass, her dress. VO: "And you would not, for the world, awake..." – Harsher fog begins to appear around her body. Focus on rosemary and lily lolls on her curly ginger hair as she sleeps. (1 to 17)

Match Cut to: (N1 in N2 – blue scene + fog) wet rosemary + lily lolls on white bed, the male passes and he grabs them. (N2 – less bright, darker atmosphere) As he does, female appears on white bed inside the room with flowers etc, with exact same sleeping position as in forest. Windows open. Wind starts to appear all over the room; curtains, bed, her dress. She remains in the same sleeping position, impassible. (Laughs are heard, mixed with the breeze.) (N3) Close up + track backwards at her closed eyed lids as Male's hand runs across Female's face and hair slowly... He's sitting next to her on the bed and says: "So fitfully.... So fearfully..." He observes her sleeping. Wind in progress + sounds of flow of a river. (18 – 27)

S2:

He gets up and walks on another direction, camera goes down from bed to his feet to his shadow on the ground and wind dims down. Whispers. The shadow is now on the wall and divides into two and become two "spirits" with physical bodies in white nightgowns + white masks. Both observing the Female sleeping in each corner of the bed. (N2 – bright/mysterious) Cut to forest + fog with exact same composition/position/distance of characters, this time Female is standing, eyelids still closed. They get slowly closer to her, camera frames her face then tracks backwards and spirits are gone, instead Male comes into scene and whispers to her ear "Dear, have you no fears?". Wind echoed in trees. Close ups to Female's features /complexions getting wet + pale. Water rapidly flowing in river with rosemary + flowers floating. Close up to Male's mouth "Why and what are you dreaming here?". Moment of silence as Female is standing – then falling backwards. – Match Cut to Female soaked on bed (just hair?) with water dripping + fog dispersed on floor; wet nature/flowers on her. Male observing her. Drops falling to the ground. The two spirits emerge and pass by, back and forward. Male observes them while saying "I pray to God..." -

Close up of Male's mouth with teardrops falling on cheek- "that she may lie forever..."—spirits then observing her and getting closer. Enter their dialogue among whispers, One of them: *** "The ceremony is about to start." The other one nods. *** Spirits get closer... Spirits choke her. Male's mouth with dried tears "With unopened eyes." Close shot to her face - opening eyes, as if she drowned. Sounds of deadly echoing + under water effect. (28 – 44)

S3:

Cut to) standing in front of white sheeted bed. We see his back. As he moves out of frame, – V.O: "May your sleep.." -- Reveals Female on black dress? on bed behind him, all dried, all pale, in dead position, eyes closed, dark flowers / dead nature + earth surrounding her Male next to her "As it is lasting...", He approaches her – worms?/earth on Female's hands. He whispers to the dead body's ear "So be deep." Quick cut to black.

Fade from black, we see him in prayer position, exhausted expression, redish eyes. he incorporates from kneeling. Next and last shot, him standing next to empty black sheeted bed, **crumpling the paper and letting it fall on the ground** - Ending credits. (Till 47)

*A dream so vivid you can feel the cold breeze against your face, the stench of death and dried tears creeping up your nose that you question its reality. This dream – nightmare – is like many Edgar Allan Poe poems and stories. "The Sleeper" published first in 1831 focuses on the death of a beautiful woman, Irene. In Greek mythology Irene is the goddess of peace. The poem also focuses on a **man's journey through the denial of this reality**.*

*to create an atmosphere as it progresses – to construct the figure of a dream in a nonlinear (cause-and-effect chain) way

*symbolism, oneiric, ethereal – a dimension out of time-space notion

*stimulate all the senses – to transport/immerse audience to the scenes

*bed: sacred chamber