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Analysis on Edgar Allan Poe’s, “Alone”

“Alone,” by Edgar Allan Poe, is a twenty-two-lined elegy consisting of dark, sorrowful themes, such as loss, isolation, and fear. The poem introduces Poe’s somber and complicated childhood by describing his traumatic experiences in his early hours and the sadness he still bears in his adult years. Poe writes about how he has lived a life isolated from others and could never relate to them as he had suffered from the major loss of a close family member in his adolescence. The theme presents itself quite boldly from beginning to end. The vibrant language used to describe Poe’s loneliness gives the reader the impression that the theme can be related to despair, trepidation, and desolation. The significance of, “Alone,” is the overall tone and raw emotion depicted when talking about his past and what he had experienced growing up. The authenticity within this poem give the words a deeper meaning and a profound importance into the dark and isolated childhood Poe endured. Poe signifies his desolation when saying, “from childhood's hour I have not been/ as others were; I have not seen/ as others saw,” meaning he never belonged nor understood the standards of other children when it came to happiness or contentment (1-3). Poe uses several poetic devices throughout the poem, such as, visual imagery, metaphors, and rhyming. Poe utilizes visual imagery by incorporating natural scenery in contrast to his emotions. Poe’s description of, “the torrent, or the fountain,” and, “the red cliff of the mountain,” gives the reader a distinction between Poe’s emotions and the natural beauty of the earth, which may be symbolic to other people’s lives (13-14). Another common poetic device found within, “Alone,” is the consistent rhyming. Poe cleverly uses rhyming in lines such as, “my heart to joy at the same tone;/ And all I loved, I loved alone;” this brings out sense of musicality within the poem and makes the poem more enjoyable for the reader (7-8). Poe’s use of metaphors within the poem bring an endless amount of interpretations to the table and gives the literature a deeper meaning. Poe makes it known that, “[he] could not bring/ [his] passions from a common spring,” thus meaning, the “common spring” as a reflection on the other children’s devotions, rather than a stream of rushing water (3-4). The poem, “Alone,” by Edgar Allan Poe is a brief reflection on Poe’s life at an early age and explains how the effects of loss within his life contributed to his dark and desolated persona.