

Free essay on the scent of ambien an analysis of diors midnight poison

[Life](#), [Death](#)



According to the “Midnight Poison” print advertisement from Christian Dior, designed for placement in Glamour, “a new Cinderella is born” with this fragrance. When we think of Cinderella, a fair-haired, rosy-cheeked maiden comes to mind, hale but not yet prematurely aged from a regimen of hard work, from dawn to dusk. Her cheeks are rosy, and her skin has the glow of youthful energy. In this ad, aimed at women from their twenties through their forties, we see the opposite: a raven-tressed girl, slender to the point of fragility, looks up at us. Her pale skin suggests, if not death, a lifestyle of such oblivion that ill health is certainly a possibility. Instead of returning back to her rags at midnight, surrounded by a pumpkin, an old horse and a dormouse or two, this Cinderella becomes a different sort of bewitchment, but one wonders whether the prince would have found this version even half as attractive. The totality of the ad suggests enervation and ennui, instead of enjoyment and enticement.

The camera angle and the model’s posture may have been intended to give the viewer a sense of power, or to focus the viewer’s eyes on the model’s entrancing blue eyes. With her elbows out to the sides, though, the model looks to be drowning in a clear, blue pool. Her face looks up, not with supplication or with any sort of interest; the apathy of the model is obvious from her face which, for better or worse, is the focus of the ad. The background is a deep midnight blue, and the model’s body fades away into it. This makes for an interesting parallel with the “Cinderella” narrative, as the real heroine’s magic also disappears at midnight. The folds of her dress, billowing out, also create an impression that the model is slowly drowning. Her head is tilted to one side, and her forearms create an interesting effect:

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with one pointing straight upward and the other pointing down into the lower left-hand corner, one can see these as the hands of a clock. Here, though, the “ hands” extend out beyond the frame of the picture, suggesting that she has pushed through the boundaries of normal time, and that the rules that had sent the young stepdaughter home in such shame and embarrassment no longer have to apply.

Other than the blue of the model’s eyes, fingernails and dress (and the bottle of perfume), the only other color that appears in the ad is the deep red of her lips. Even in this enervated state, the possibility of passion is clearly suggested: if you follow the lines of her arms and cheeks, your eyes are drawn immediately to her mouth. This, it would seem, is the draw of the perfume – an endless passion, the complete opposite of the girl who had to flee the castle before she could kiss her prince. This Cinderella, this ad seems to suggest, will never have to leave. The typography of the ad bolsters the otherworldly nature of this new creation, a white all-caps font that reminded me of that used in the credits of some of the great fantasy films of days gone by, such as *Clash of the Titans*.

Based on the more subtle elements at work, this spot has many elements going for it. The layout and the coloring lend a great deal of artistry and figurative meaning, giving the viewer many subconscious cues about the power of the perfume. The lines draw the viewer right where the designer wanted, I believe – right to the center, to the possibility of passion. What prince wouldn’t want a Cinderella who could stay out past midnight – who could stay out forever? This is the point where the perfume ad appeals to the

audience's pathos – women who are starting to think about aging just a bit hate limits of any kind, and avoiding Cinderella's fate could be a welcome respite from life's struggles. Depending on whether or not you view this limitation in the fairy tale as a metaphor on the normal limits of human experience, it's clear that the ad designer does: if you try on this perfume, the message suggests, you will have the otherworldly powers of enticement that this model does.

However, the pallor of the model, and the deathlike visage that she gives forth, take the promise of unending passion and make the viewer wonder how ardent this experience would turn out to be. How many times have we read stories about people who tried to bend the rules of human existence, only to find tragedy and toil on their hands? For every Snow White, who is rescued from the effects of the poisoned apple, there is an Icarus, his melted wings settling down around him as he crashed to his death. All you have to do is take one look at this model's expression to see that there are clear risks at work with this transformation. While some risk is sexy, we can almost see that this potion might take too much out in return. In other words, would this model be powered by some unearthly force that comes from beyond the grave, or would she out and about in an Ambien dream?