

How do the authors's create a feeling of suspense

Literature



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Jane Eyre and Rebecca share many qualities despite being written over a century apart. They are both novels of romantic suspense although Jane Eyre has an element of Gothic Horror that Rebecca does not. Rebecca is the story of a young girl who marries the distinguished Maxim de winter. A widow haunted by his dead wife's memory. A secret lies beneath the surface of his home, the beautiful Manderley. She is originally companioning a woman many years her senior who is constantly putting her down.

She meets the glamorous Mr. De winter while on her travels. Jane Eyre is the story of a girl orphaned at a young age. She becomes the governess for Mr. Rochester of Thornfield hall and falls in love with him only to unveil his terrible secret that ruins the lives of everyone in the house. Both women are in similar situations as they are both vulnerable young women who are involved with, almost rescued, by men above their station and are haunted by their former wives. They are very different in character although in similar situations.

Jane Eyre is stubborn and hardened by her harsh childhood. Whereas the heroine in Rebecca is a very vulnerable low status character with no confidence and a habit of daydreaming and is hugely paranoid. Both stories are of girls from broken childhoods finding their place in life with the men they love after struggling through their terrible pasts. Charlotte Bronte uses many techniques to make this chapter suspenseful and exiting. The chapter starts with the heroine, Jane Eyre, being awoken by the moonlight shining in her bedroom.

The way she explains that this is an odd thing to wake her as she always draws her curtain normally, makes it seem like something out of the ordinary is perhaps going to happen that night. Bronte uses personification to make the moon appear like an ethereal sombre presence watching her calm and objective " I opened my eyes on her disc-silver white and crystal clear. It was beautiful, but too solemn". Jane also uses the words " dead of night" to describe the time of night which is a commonly used expression, yet used together with the many other references in this chapter to death, night and darkness, adds to the atmosphere.

A terrifying shriek coming from just above Jane's head, suddenly resonates through the house, following this come many short, sharp sentences, Jane's internal monologue causing a feeling of panic within the reader. " Good god, what a cry! My pulse stopped: my heart stood still: my stretched arm paralysed" metaphorical language that helps us feel Jane's fear. To see the heroine, normally so calm and fearless, so afraid immediately makes us realise that something is seriously wrong.

Bronte uses onomatopoeia and alliteration to describe the shriek, " a savage, a sharp, a shrilly sound" the harsh, deafening shriek following the calm silence before that creates a contrast that adds to the strangeness surrounding the whole chapter. The other contrast used is the contrast of light and dark, the dark of the night and the light of the moon, the candle Mr Rochester is holding and the darkness of the house. Jane takes us along with her as the events happen, and then tension builds up in the reader as it does in her, as we know as little as Jane about what has taken place.

We have no idea what has happened or who it has happened to. Previous to Mr Rochester's appearance, there were more of the short panic stricken phrases coming from the other people awoken by the scream. " Oh! What is it? Who is hurt? What has happened? Fetch a light? Is it fire? Are there robbers? Where shall we run? " this adds confusion to the terror and shows how alarmed the other residents are, in contrast to the comparably calm Jane. The short sentences helps to break up the text making you jumpy like the words, and easy to scare.

Rochester makes excuses after his entrance and tries to keep spirits up by speaking light heartedly " all's right! it's a mere rehearsal of Much Ado about Nothing. " Although he is obviously shaken himself, " his black eyes darted sparks. Calming himself by an effort... " Jane is suspicious of the excuse Rochester gives about the servant's nightmare and is not convinced. She prepared herself for what was to come although she did not know what she was expecting, this raises the tension again for the reader as it makes you on edge, waiting for the next terror.

Bronte describes the moors as " silvered fields" which adds an eerie feeling, as fields are not normally silver yet in the strange light of the moon appear so. Once Rochester has called for Jane the tension continues to build up. As they walk to low, claustrophobic corridors, reminiscent of Jane's youth and the terror that she felt when she was locked in the haunted room, you begin to wonder what Rochester has in store for Jane. What task he could possibly want her to do after the horror that has taken place that night.

The concealed door adds to the mystery of what is hidden in Thornfield, and behind it the voice of Grace Poole. This makes you very suspicious of her and adds to the fear you feel later when Jane is locked in this apartment. There is contrast again with the shocking red blood and white sheets. Jane is ordered not to speak to Mason, the injured man, and he to her " you will not speak to him on any pretext-and-Rochester, it will be at the peril of your life if you speak to her" this insinuates that there are secrets that Mason holds that could easily be exposed.

Bronte uses onomatopoeia to describe the feeling inside of Jane as well as the sound of the key and Rochester locks her inside the room with the injured Mason and a servant who we presume to be a violent maniac " key grating". She is then left alone with her thoughts for a long time. As the story goes on Charlotte Bronte manages to convey a very convincing feeling of gothic horror to the reader. She uses a very fast pace in certain places, short phrases and a lot of exclamations keeping your mind racing. This generates the panic and confusion that formulates the horror in our minds in this chapter.

Rebecca has a different sense of fear. It is more of an anxiety than the obvious horror that is in Jane Eyre. The difference in their characters is obvious, with Jane being very stoical and although vulnerable less so than the character in Rebecca. The girl in Rebecca is much more insecure and waiflike. Her anxiety and fears come from within her rather than from external forces as in Jane Eyre. Chapter 7 in Rebecca starts with Maxim de Winter driving his new bride, the heroine to her new home and his long-standing estate.

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She describes the clothes that she was wearing at the time which make her feel uncomfortable " I can see myself now, unsuitably dressed as usual, although a bride of seven weeks, in a tan-coloured stockinet frock, a small fur known as a stone marten round my neck, and over all a shapeless mackintosh, far too big for me and dragging at my ankles. " This is a metaphor for how she feels in her new role as Maxim's wife. She feels the clothes are ill fitting and inappropriate, too old for her, too sophisticated. Her feelings of anxiety in the beginning stem from her worries about living up to Maxim's deceased wife memory.

She is young and has married quickly to a man very much above her in status and in wealth. She is very unsure of his reasons for marrying her yet is hugely in love with him. Her feelings are torn as she has looked forward to her arrival at Manderley yet now dreads it, " I knew then that he had mistaken my silence for fatigue, and it had not occurred to him I dreaded this arrival at Manderley as much as I had longed for it in theory". De Winter is unaware of her apprehension. The sense of tension is variable throughout the chapter, as at points she is calmed by things like the weather clearing up.

This is another difference between this chapter in Rebecca and chapter 20 in Jane Eyre. Jane Eyre is set in very bleak weather, the terror taking place at night, it is much more obvious than in Rebecca as this is set in the sunny daytime making it more subtly sinister. The brightness and colour making Manderley garish and unwelcoming, and as always the lurking memory of Maxim's late wife. As they go up the long twisting driveway Maxim's bride's

heart wrenches with every turn. Her anxiety is caused mainly by worries of what everyone will think of her, will she fit in?

Will she live up to the expectations that Rebecca set so high? When she reaches the house and receives such a hostile reception her feelings are only increased. She sees small town's on the way to Manderley and clearly wishes she could live in the rural normality that the people she sees do. This demonstrates again her feeling of insecurity in her position at Manderley, she longs for a simple life, with the man that she loves, she doesn't want to live up to someone else's shadow yet wants to make the best impression that she can.

She obviously doesn't feel that Manderley is her home and as they draw closer to the house her anxiety grows as she sees servants looking at her, waiting. Her feelings towards the impressive house and garden's are comparable to the ones she has of Rebecca " too beautiful and too powerful", in this quote she is describing the blood red rhododendrons, one of the empowered plants that she sees on the drive up to Manderley.

She makes it seem like a terrifying theme park ride " I gripped the leather seat of the car with my two hands" forever anticipating the arrival of the house " it must be this turn I thought, or round that further bend". Rebecca, in contrast to Jane Eyre is a severely fearful person who is constantly and obsessively fabricating elaborate daydreams, some of how wonderful her life will be at Manderley and others of the terrible things that may happen.

Her fear is of what she will confront when she reaches Manderley, of the legend that is her husband's first wife and how she will live up to it. You are <https://assignbuster.com/how-do-the-authorss-create-a-feeling-of-suspense/>

reminded of the opening of the book and the strange distorted Manderley that the heroine finds in her dream. It is a broken ghostly place, still alive in the same way that she sees it now but corrupted and spoiled, hardly recognisable as the beautiful perfectly nurtured citadel that it once was.

You are very aware of what is to happen as you drive up to the house with them. This adds to the trepidation that you feel throughout the next few chapters as it is a memory of what will soon be lurking in the back of your mind. Her new husband is totally unaware of his wifes feelings as they approach the house, which estranges her more and increases her fearfulness. She calms herself somewhat by imagining the new life that is ahead of her, of how happy she will be.