

The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb oratories,
He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails

This extract taken from Keats's narrative poem 'The Eve of St Agnes' shows the poet's sense of empathy. The poet creates the intensity of cold with the help of suggestive words.

The sculptur'd dead seems to freeze. They are enclosed in black iron railings. They appear to be experiencing the ~~pains~~ pains of purgatory. The sculptured figures of knights and ladies in their 'icy hoods and mails' appear to be suffering owing to the intensity of cold. By presenting the stone images as suffering the pain of purgatory, the poet creates an atmosphere of chill. The medieval imagination of the poet finds expression in the choice of words like 'knights' and 'ladies'.

The poet's ability to project himself through statues is quite manifest here. Harsh consonantal sound 'D' in dead, 'dumb' accentuates the atmosphere of silence. The movement of the lines is clogged. The passage both describes and exemplifies empathy.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline
The music, yearning like a god in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping train

This extract taken from "The Eve of St Agnes" presents Madeline as a romantic girl lost in the thought of her future lover.

Madeline's mind is completely preoccupied with the legend. It has permeated her thought and being. She is lost in her own dreams. Naturally she is oblivious of the situations around her. The golden tongue of music is loosened there. But nothing can shake her reverie. Her eyes are fixed on the floor. Her ears are attuned to the music of St. Agnes Eve. So she does not hear the music played around there. The poet emphasizes her purity. Her eyes are divine.

The metaphorical imagination of the poet operates powerfully here. Music has been likened to the wailing sound of a god whose suffering is due to unsatisfied desire. 'Sweeping train' brings to our mind the picture of the medieval chivalry.