

A Comparative Theory on the Theme of Death in Emily Dickinson's Poem "*Because I Could Not Stop For Death*" and Dylan Thomas's "*Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night*"

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Death is the critical moment which occurs to all in life, which gives the end. Religious scholars say man is soil and returns to soil. Death doesn't spare anyone. It is inevitable. There is activation of mind in birth and cessation of it at death. Nobody is going to live forever. Religion has given message to take death peacefully. Poems have given men the need to mature with knowledge of the ultimate and learn to face the divine.

In this paper presentation two poets we present how Emily Dickinson, an American writer and Dylan Thomas, a British poet, have explained death in two different aspects. Emily uses romance to relate with death in the trait of womanly grace, whereas Dylan is the most studious son to tell his father to bravo to death.

Both Dylan and Dickinson hold sentimental feelings and have dealt with death in deep thought and contemplation. They have analyzed and regarded death metaphysically. They approach it in a philosophical manner. Humans have phobia against the natural phenomenon, which means 'Born to Die'. Death gives alarm, to go to disappear or to the unknown. Men acknowledge death with fear and apprehension. They have no knowledge of the after-world mystery which scares them. Thus, death overpowers them.

The poets of this study tell us that death cannot triumph over man if faced courageously. Death is a Savior and a Deliverer. While Dickinson in her poem sets tone and mood, by significantly reveling over the eternal glory attained at death and leaving death inactive as the soul reaches the heavens, Dylan wants death to be faced with powerful energy with achievement and not slavery submission.

Emily Dickinson's perspective towards death is a calm acceptance. She personifies death and receives it as a gentleperson caller, whose courtship and polite cordial attitude overwhelms her, that she accompanies death in a significant carriage ride and journeys in a peaceful path to her everlasting abode. *Because I could not Stop for Death* symbolically shows that Emily does not fear death but is willingly looking forward to it as waiting for lover and a companion. She wants to embrace death with yearning attitude to attain immortality and so treats death as a 'beau' or fiancé. Her poem also becomes an ode paying homage to death.

On the contrary, Dylan views death with more care and concern for his father's sake and states metaphorically in his poem "Do not go gentle into that good night" by reinforcing high spirits

till the end. Dylan advises his old paternal not to give in to any painful misery of old age. Till the last he wishes his elder to exhibit courage towards death and make useful every minute of his life.

Both the poets, even though they vary in their perspective, they encourage avoiding depression or sadness to set in before death. They want us all to face the situation wisely. Dylan uses symbolic metaphors to refer to death in his nineteen-lined poem of pastoral elegance, termed as *villanelle* with two refrains, and Emily is light-hearted and whimsical in her vivid imagery as she follows her lover who is death personified.

For Dylan, night represents death; the darkness refers to the fatal aspect that approaches all beings. As age catches up, life gives depression. The poet stimulates his father to take up challenges till the end and not to let down his spirits. The third line “Rage rage against the dying of the light” reveals how the poet wishes to inspire his father with strength to accomplish even until the last moment. He also takes great care to imply correctly his philosophy to boost the morale of his father. He says that wise men had the intelligence to look forward to their life’s last days on earth and, however hard they tried to impress the public, they ended up just as same as the common. Therefore, going the path of long sleep certainly was never gentle for them. They could not get recognition from their accomplishments and at last knew that all the great must go to the grave.

On the contrary Emily Dickinson, in symbolism, passively presents the carriage ride journey, as the various stages for getting ready to die and take to eternal journey, to the heavens. At first, she gracefully accepts eagerly like a bride. But as night falls, a chill fear creeps before her submission.

Though both the poets treat death as themes from different perspectives they merge at the conclusive solution.

Death, for Emily, waited patiently to take her to eternity in a loving manner. Death affectionately makes her to put away her mundane labor and leisure in this life. Through the ride, Emily observes the routine activities of life, the difficulties of childhood existence. Her gown symbolizes the material trappings. As she nears her destination, the poetess views with coldness as events become sinister. “We paused before a house that seemed A Swelling of the Ground-” (li.17-18), the imagery of the house at the end of her ride which is a mound and clearly a grave becomes ideal and leads her to gloriously bright eternity. Thus, she steps into immortality. Time suddenly loses its meaning; hundreds of years feel no different than a day, time is gone, the poetess enters the highest knowledge of realization and death becomes just not death, but immortality for she “surmised the Horses’ Heads Were toward Eternity-” (li.22-24). Thus, the infinite life merges and she reaches eternity in her final stanza.

Dylan, on the other hand ponders over the various aspects people face death. In line seven the poet talks about how good men face death. The sea is full of life which reflects at the colorful bay but when the rolling wave pushes itself forward it gets broken and dissolved at the blocks of the bay, it doesn’t get to thrust its full force, but dies halfway. Similarly, the good men who die early leave lesser imprints rather than they would have done if they had lived longer. Here ironically the poet himself died at an early stage like Keats, both who would have done more presentations to literature had they been alive. The serious grave people, who anticipate death, fight for the best even if they become partially blind. They shine like meteors on their way to death unlike the luxurious party men who rave at the end of their bright summer days. The poet encourages his father to be heroic in an optimistic manner. Weak submission is a taboo for the poet.

Dylan and Dickinson, both the poets, thus reflect upon death with personal concept. Death has baffled the scholars and the most sagacious, but these two poets have understood the nature of death and wish to ease the psyche of humans from the fear of death. They assure not to fear but to find everlasting happiness in death.

Dylan and Dickinson both accept death at varying angles. Dylan gives cheer to his father to rid fear and rise courageously and Dickinson had compassion and surrender when the instinct in the mind gave an alarm to die. Though she could accept it at morning she couldn't tolerate the evening like the wedding fear. She assumed she couldn't continue but, since there was no escape, she surrendered; in the same concept the British poet wants to pass on a surviving idea to his father to achieve like that of Frost's message telling one having a lot to do before going miles to sleep. As for Dylan, he wanted to give knowledge to enlighten that one can't stop death, so must embrace it at the right time. Until then whether accepting or not, one has to go on doing one's duty whatever may it be, as far as one has confidence and consciousness. One has to continue till the end to satisfy oneself and then finally sacrifice the soul in ultimate liberation.

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