

# Because i could not stop for death emily dickenson

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



Miranda Jennifer Professor A. Tripp English 355 1, October 2012 Loss Is Nothing Else but Change Experiencing a loss raises overwhelming feelings that are difficult to cope with. The emotions that accompany any kind of loss can be intense and varied. There are stages of grief that everyone goes through. A sense of shock or denial usually come first followed by anger. Bargaining follows anger, then depression, and finally acceptance. In "Because I Could Not Stop for Death," by Emily Dickinson, the speaker is taken on an unexpected journey that illuminates her path of mourning, which helps her come to an acceptance with her loss.

The title: "Because I Could Not Stop for Death," states that the speaker could not begin to grieve the loss. The speaker knew it had to end but could not bear to end it on his or her own, thus "Because I could not stop for Death,/ He kindly stopped for me;" (Lines 1-2). Dickinson mentions the speaker's outfit as a symbolism of unpreparedness. "For only gossamer my gown/ my tippet only tulle," (15-16). Dickinson's word choice play a vital role throughout the poem. The term "immortality" (4) signifies that the journey would never end. The speaker is well aware that the journey embarked on was not a round trip.

The speaker is taken on a journey filled with many experiences, all which he or she accepts and learns from. This journey illuminated the speaker's perspective of grieving with the loss of something or someone. According to Oxford Dictionaries, the adjective illuminating can be defined as: "to help to clarify or explain" (Illuminate). Even though the journey was unexpected, it brought enlightenment to the speaker's perspective of his or her loss. People

feel pain when going through a loss, but in “ Because I Could Not Stop for Death,” the speaker accepts it with ease, “ I had put away/ My labor, and my leisure too,/ For his civility”(6-8).

The speaker is essentially relieved concerning the loss. He or she is finally able to forget about everything that worries him or her. Overall, the loss brought the speaker tranquility. In stanza three, the speaker takes a trip down memory lane. “ We passed the school, where children strove At recess, in the ring; We passed the fields of gazing grain, We passed the setting sun. ” Remembering past times is a typical thing to do when dealing with grief. The speaker of “ Because I Could Not Stop for Death,” accepted his or her loss, for it eventually led her to an immortality full of bliss.

When losing someone or something, it is important to know that it will get better. Losing someone or something can be the most devastating thing for anyone, but it is important to understand that once you come to acceptance with the loss, there is light behind the tunnel. The speaker of the poem is well aware of this and he or she agrees to the journey, not knowing where his or her destination would be. After a long journey of mourning, the speaker is taken to a new home, where he or she can finally be at ease. “ We paused before a house [...] The roof was scarcely visible,”(7, 9).

A new home signifies a new beginning. Over all the loss that the speaker is going through, has brought him or her to a new commencement in his or her life. “’Tis centuries, and yet each Feels shorter than the day I first surmised the horses’ heads Were toward eternity. ” The best thing one can do when moving on from a loss is to take each passing moment as an opportunity to

grow. The speaker was able to view his or her loss as an opportunity for emotional growth. Thus, the journey that the speaker in "Because I Could Not Stop for Death" took illuminated his or her path towards the acceptance of his or her loss.

Marcus Aurelius said, "Loss is nothing else but change, and change is Nature's delight." Works Cited Dickinson, Emily. "Because I Could Not Stop for Death." *The Compact Bedford Introduction to Literature: Reading, Thinking, Writing*. 9th ed. Ed. Michael Meyer. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2012. 844. Print. "Illuminate." *Definition of Illuminate*. Oxford Dictionaries, 2012. Web. 24 Sept. 2012. . Meyer, Michael. "A Study of Emily Dickinson." *Preface*. *The Compact Bedford Introduction to Literature: Reading, Thinking, Writing*. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2012. 819-28. Print.