

# Beyond death

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In her poem “ Because I Could not Stop for Death,” Emily Dickinson expresses the peace within a woman whose death draws near.

One may expect a poem about death to be full of fear and pain. However, this work possesses a quiet, reflective tone. Emily Dickinson uses the plotline, the theme, and the literary devices in “ Because I Could not Stop for Death” to present her message. The poem concerns Death and the speaker driving along the road of the narrator’s life. Their journey took them from the birth of the narrator to the point where she ascended into heaven. “ Because I Could not Stop for Death” involves Death, Immortality, and the speaker, who drive in a carriage near the end of the narrator’s life.

Along the way, they pass schoolchildren at play, fields of grain, and the setting sun. All these represent stages of the speaker’s life. The children represented her childhood, the fields stood for the speaker’s days of toil and growth, and the setting sun marks the close of her life. Then the carriage “ paused before a House” (l 7) which symbolizes the grave of the narrator. After the short stop, the carriage continues on “ toward Eternity” (l 24), to the speaker’s everlasting home in heaven. “ Because I Could not Stop for Death” centers on the theme of peace.

Though the poem mainly concerns death, the speaker shows peacefulness as she drives along with him. Evidently, the narrator did not fear Death; she said he “ kindly stopped” (l 2) for her and that he possessed “ civility” (l 8). One would not fear a man whom one regards as gracious. Furthermore, the two “ slowly drove” (l 5) because they “ knew no haste” (l 5). The speaker had “ put away” (l 7) her “ labor and.

.. leisure too" (l 7). These lines also depict the carefree and peaceful manner of the speaker. In "Because I Could not Stop for Death," Emily Dickinson mostly illustrated her message with symbolism.

Ms. Dickinson used the carriage drive to represent the speaker's journey to her death. Additionally, the narrator's clothes were made of gossamer and tulle—fabrics typically used for a bridal gown, indicating the speaker's role of a bride going to meet her bridegroom. This symbolizes the reuniting of a Christian and her figurative bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Revelation 21: 2 says, "I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband" (New International Version, Revelation 21: 2).

The "House that seemed/A Swelling of the Ground" (l 17-18) with the "scarcely visible" (l 19) roof and the cornice "in the Ground" (l 20) symbolizes the speaker's coffin and her state of death. The poem "Because I Could not Stop for Death" urges the reader not to fear death. In this work, Emily Dickinson created the picture of a woman peacefully traveling to her death. Along the way, the speaker merely "paused" (l 17) at her grave, signifying the temporary state of death. Afterwards, one notices that she wore the garments of a bride.

This relates to how a Christian becomes the bride of Christ after death. For the nonchristian, one only needs to fear the Hell which follows. On the other hand, the Christian can look beyond death to living in heaven with the Lord forever. Works Cited Dickinson, E. "Because I could not stop for Death (712)." *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*.

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