

Central theme of Death Be Not Proud

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Death be not Proud is the most celebrated poem written by John Donne. It has been written in the form of sonnet which finds a peculiar blend of Elizabethan as well as Petrarchan sonnet. It follows the structural pattern of Elizabethan or Shakespearean sonnet which consists of three quartets followed by a couplet whereas it borrows the rhyming pattern of Petrarchan sonnet which is ABBA. The poet raises the problem in the quartets that death no longer be dauntless. There is no valid ground for death treating it the most powerful. It cannot cause any threat to human beings. Its mystery has been revealed. It is an extended version of rest and sleep. As we emerge more fresh and energetic after taking sleep. In the same manner we enjoy even greater pleasure after embracing death. One is all set to join the company of God after one's body is consigned to flame which seems to be a boon in disguise to him. Another important feature of the poem is that here death has been personified with the poet challenging his authority telling him not to treat him very powerful which is on the wane. Donne employs apostrophe, the technique of directly addressing an abstract idea. The opening line is an imperative sentence the speaker tells, death, "be not proud". He makes an alteration by adding a Volta, Death, thou shalt die, towards the end of the poem cutting across the accepted line.

In the first stanza the poet recalls the belief that people in the past had the wrong perception that death ends the life of a person

but the poet rejects the wrong precedence that death destroys the life of man. Man enjoys even greater pleasure therefore the question of death posing and threat doesn't carry any meaning.

In the second stanza the poet's belief that death finally culminates into a bliss acquires a concrete shape. He no longer treats death as the end of life. There is even a greater pleasure awaiting him at the doorstep. He is hopeful that it might culminate into a much bigger reward. In the third stanza the invincibility of death has been challenged. Death itself cannot cast a spell on human being. Death can be rewarded in the form of war poison and misfortune. As the fact that death can cause human to sleep it does not death special. Therefore there is no reason to be proud. In the last stanza the speaker says that death can make humans sleep for a short time after which they will awake eternally.