

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I am going to draw a conclusion based on my analysis of three of Robert Frost's poems and three of Emily Dickinson's poems revealed through diction. Robert Frost's poems that I have analyzed are: "In a Disused Graveyard," "Spoils Of The Dead," and "Out, Out." Emily Dickinson's poems that I have analyzed are: "Because I could not stop for Death," "The last Night that She lived," and "Those fair—fictitious People—."

The theme of Frost's "In a Disused Graveyard" is **Death is so fearful that the living deny it**. It is revealed through uses of diction that are related to denial, such as "disused" and also "hate." The feeling of "hate" that the living feel is a strong evidence of the theme of this poem, because it shows the denial or refusal to accept death as a fact of life. The word "disused" also signals the theme of denial because it contains the hope of the living that the graveyard will always be empty, or, in other words, that people would stop dying. This attitude shows that humans fear death so they deny death as a finality of their life.

The theme of Frost's "Spoils of the Dead" is **Death, which may seem calming and comforting at first, eventually will cause sorrow, as when one dies one loses everything one has.** The beginning of the poem shows that death is calming and comforting, and it is revealed through these words: "summer," "flower," and "bed." However, at the end of the poem death is described as an unpleasant event that brings sadness. It is revealed through uses of diction that are related to sorrow, such as "sorrow," "dread," and "hate." If we take a look at the title we might feel confused as the word "spoils" has several meanings. However, it generally has a negative meaning. In this context, the word "spoils" means something stolen or taken by a thief, and in this poem this spoils of the dead reminds the living that when one dies, everything will be stolen from one.

The theme of Frost's "Out, Out" is **Death is unpredictable, for it can come all of a sudden.** At the beginning of the poem we can feel a day that is so beautiful that even the dust from the wood is described as sweet-scented stuff. The setting is also beautiful and calming with the breeze and the mountain. These beautiful sceneries are contrasted to the coming darkness of death. Rather than using gloomy weather, Frost uses beautiful imageries to create a shocking effect of the suddenness of death that relates directly to the theme. The phrase "nothing happened" also suggests that this is just a normal working day like any other day. But unfortunately, this poem is not a happy poem about nature. All of a sudden the saw leaps out at the boy's hand, then cuts it; this event kills the boy.

The theme of Dickinson's "Because I could not stop for Death" is **Death is a journey toward the beginning of a new life.** It is revealed through uses of diction such as "immortality," "paused," and "eternity." Immortality signifies the

speaker's thought that death is not the end, but something which will bring the speaker to the next life. The word "paused" suggests that it is just a temporary stop, implying that the speaker's death lasts for only a short time. There is eternity ahead, for death is just a temporary journey.

The theme of Dickinson's "The last Night that She lived" is **Death is inevitable and to be accepted, as death can be relieving**. It is revealed through diction such as "must" and "consented." The word "must" signifies the inevitability of death. The dying woman does not have a choice but must die. The word choice "consented" here displays a calmness. "Consented" is associated with willingness and approval, which shows that she is ready for death. Death is unavoidable, and yet the speaker shows it is like a normal event to emphasize the calmness and peace of death.

The theme of Dickinson's "Those fair—fictitious People—" is **Death provides a brand new life which is a better quality of life** and it is revealed through words that are related to a better life, such as "perfecter," "fair," and also "blesseder." They are related to the theme that being dead does not make us worse but better. Now they live in a place that lacks nothing and it is somewhere that gives great pleasure or enjoyment.

After analyzing the poems from Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson, I found several similarities between Frost and Dickinson. Both of them are American poets and in the poems I analyzed, they both talk about death. They are aware that someday, sooner or later, death will come to us all. It means that they know that death is inevitable. Death is an event that we will face; nothing in this world can stop it. Death is a certainty no matter how we despise it. In Frost's "In

a Disused Graveyard,” the rhyme on the gravestones emphasize what is written on the gravestones about the coming of death. It emphasizes the message which the gravestones want to deliver. It is a reminder of the fact that death will come in the near future and it is inevitable. In other words, death is a certainty for the living. In Dickinson’s “The last Night that She lived,” the word “final” signifies that the dying woman’s fate cannot be changed. Her death is ultimate. Again, this is an emphasis that death is inevitable, because in the future it will come for us.

In spite of the similarities, there are also several differences between their poems. The poets’ perspectives about death are different. In the poems by Dickinson that I analyzed, Dickinson romanticizes death and makes death look “better” or less scary. Dickinson, with her romantic view, accepts death and has a notion that death brings comfort to people who have lost their loved ones or are facing death themselves. A person’s death is not seen as the end and death is valued higher than being alive in the world.

In my opinion, Dickinson romanticizes death because “She rejected absolutely the idea of man's innate depravity; she favored the Emersonian partial reversal of Puritanism that conceived greatness of soul as the source of immortality” (“Emily Dickinson’s Ideas”). She believes in the immortality of the soul, that is, life after death. Because of this belief, Dickinson softens the sorrow and is able to find comfort because of the knowledge that life still goes on even after death. Dickinson wrote at the end of romantic period (1828-1865) and it is very obvious that the characteristics of this period are reflected in her works, as stated that: “The subject of human mortality is present in Dickinson’s poem, and the question of what lies beyond death is discussed. This relates directly to the

subjects of romanticism; it is clear that in her poem, Dickinson has a desire for knowledge and wisdom, especially for what the future – and eternity – holds” (“Emily Dickinson”).

Unlike Dickinson, who romanticizes death, Robert Frost is more realistic when dealing with the topic of death. Frost views death as something that most people normally feel, which is fear. In his diction, one can see that Frost is realistic because the diction signifies that one cannot find comfort in death. People will deny death, because grieving is painful. No one knows when death comes or whether it will be slowly or brutally. These uses of diction help to reveal the themes to represent death as it really is and how people react to death. Like Dickinson, Frost’s writing was influenced by the period in which he lived. Frost wrote in Modern period of the American literature. The modernist “viewed the world with a more pessimistic lens” (“Robert Frost: A Modernist or Not?”). That is the reason why Frost came to this perspective of this painful death.

I believe that Frost’s view is realistic because of the darkness of his life. Frost witnessed death when he buried his children and his wife. Frost’s son, Elliot, died of cholera, while his daughter, Marjorie, died of fever shortly after birth. His wife, Elinor Miriam White Frost, died at the age of sixty-five from a heart attack; his thirty-eight-year-old son, Carol, committed suicide. His experience with so many deaths of people close to him definitely affected his way of talking about death in his poems. As a modernist, he viewed death as the enemy of life, a distant end point and best forgotten.

Both authors have given me new insights about death. I think Frost is successful in presenting the reality of death in his poems. Three of Frost’s poems

that show the fear and hatred for death are very real. For example, in my favorite poem, “Spoils Of The Dead,” at first, death seems comforting, but the reality is it still brings sorrow. Reading his poems makes me more afraid to face death.

Another thing is, I believe, death is what everyone experiences at the end of their life. There are no exceptions, because we are mortal beings. Time is the only difference for everyone. Of course, death makes us feel worried and scared, but Dickinson’s poems encourage me to deal with death because her poems make death less scary - even makes it a beautiful occasion.

