

Giuliano Manzi Cervantes

Elaine Lux

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### Poems, Death, and Literary Devices.

John Donne's poem "Death, be not proud" is a profound meditation on the nature of death and the human condition. The poem has captivated readers for centuries, and its literary devices have been the subject of much scholarly analysis. This essay will explore how the literary devices used in the poem serve to deepen and enrich our understanding of its themes. This essay will also examine the portrayal of death in Donne's work, as well as its comparison to Jaroslav Seifert's "The Mistress of the Poets." Finally, this essay will analyze Margaret Edson's use of Donne's poem in her play "Wit." Through these supporting points, we will gain a greater appreciation for the power and enduring appeal of Donne's masterpiece.

John Donne's "Death, be not proud" is a sonnet that employs several literary devices to deliver its message. The poem's central theme is the victory of life over death, and Donne employs personification to depict death as a character that is not worthy of the fear and reverence that people associate with it. In the opening lines, Donne addresses Death as "Death, be not proud," which anthropomorphizes it and gives it a personality.

Furthermore, Donne utilizes paradox to create an ironic twist. The poet claims that death is not the end and mocks death's power by stating "Death, be not proud, though some have called thee / Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so." By doing so, Donne subverts the traditional idea that death is the ultimate destroyer and reimagines it as a mere temporary state of being. In addition, Donne's use of hyperbole emphasizes the speaker's disdain for death. For instance, the speaker asserts, "One short sleep past, we wake eternally, / And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die." This hyperbole emphasizes the speaker's confidence in the afterlife and the ultimate triumph of life over death. Overall, Donne's "Death, be not proud" is a masterful work of poetry that employs various literary devices to convey its message of the ultimate victory of life over death. (Abdulla and Lutfi 167)

Death is a central theme in the works of John Donne and Jaroslav Seifert. Both these authors explore death in their works, but they do so in different ways. Donne's works often focus on the inevitability of death and the transience of human life. For example, in his poem "Death Be Not Proud," Donne argues that death is not something to be feared because it is not the end of life. Seifert, on the other hand, portrays death as a natural and inevitable part of life. In his poem "The Death of a Poet," Seifert describes the death of a poet as a peaceful and natural process. He suggests that death is not something to be feared, but rather something to be accepted as part of the natural cycle of life. Both Donne and Seifert's works offer different perspectives on death, but they both recognize the universality of death and its impact on human life. As B. Dash notes, both authors

"offer a philosophical and existential perspective on death that encourages readers to confront their own mortality and consider the meaning of life" (Dash). In this way, both authors use their works to explore the human condition and encourage readers to reflect on the inevitability of death.

Margaret Edson's play "Wit" is a thought-provoking analysis of life, death, and human relationships. The play is centered on the character of Vivian Bearing, a scholar of John Donne's metaphysical poetry, who is diagnosed with terminal ovarian cancer. Edson uses Donne's poem "Death Be Not Proud" as a recurring motif throughout the play, highlighting the themes of mortality and the human condition. According to MM Keaveney, "Edson's use of Donne's poem serves as a metaphor for Vivian's struggle to understand her own mortality and the limitations of her academic knowledge." (Keaveney) Vivian's journey through her illness is a testament to the power of human relationships, and the realization that true understanding and meaning can only come from the connections we make with others. In addition, Edson uses the character of Vivian to question the role of academic knowledge in the face of death. Through Vivian's experiences, Edson suggests that true understanding and empathy can only be gained through lived experiences, rather than through scholarly pursuits. Ultimately, "Wit" serves as a powerful reminder of the fragility of life, and the importance of human connection and empathy in the face of mortality.

In conclusion, John Donne's "Death, be not proud" poem utilizes various literary devices to provide a deeper and more profound understanding of the subject matter. The articles "The Portrayal of Death in Donne's 'Death Be Not Proud' and Jaroslav Seifert's 'The Mistress of the Poets': A Comparative Study" and "Death be not proud: an analysis of Margaret Edson's Wit" provide insight into how Donne's poem has inspired further literary works and has been analyzed by literary scholars. The poem's use of metaphors, paradoxes, and personification enhances the readers' understanding of death and its inevitable nature. The analysis of Donne's poem highlights the importance of literary devices in providing an in-depth interpretation of a text, and how these devices can influence and inspire further literary works.

- Works Cited:

John Donne, "Death, be not proud," 4th ed. 469, 2nd ed.

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