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Everlasting Hope That Brings Forth Perseverance

Many literature pieces touch on the idea of hope, but none does so in the way Emily Dickinson does. Many of her poems, including “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers”, are mysterious while containing underlying meanings. Hope is seen as a big driving factor of what pushes people to keep persevering and enduring whatever life may throw at them. Emily Dickinson’s poem, “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers”, published in the 1890s, examines Dickinson’s idea of endless hope. Throughout the poem Dickinson compels readers to understand that hope is something that forever lives in one’s soul and it is supposed to compel and empower us. The poem contains images of a bird singing through continual hardship because of the hope empowered in it. The big metaphor in the poem is a bird, representing hope, living inside a human. Emily Dickinson’s poem, “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers” examines the power of hope and the deep influence it leaves on humans through her use of metaphors and symbolism in the poem.

Emily Dickinson’s poem, “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers” examines the power of hope, as it was widely believed to have a big significance on people in centuries. In her article, Kate Choi explains how in Greek mythology, hope was “kept” in a Pandora box that would only be opened to ward off evil spirits. People believed that humanity would not survive without the power of hope, had it been taken from them (Choi). Josh Mayo talks about hope in the sense that:

“Hope is a tenacious creature. Like the poppy that bursts from the curbside, like the finch that hangs its nest in the glacier, hope is an extremophile. The weight of pedestrian life does not crush it; the chill of the remote does not freeze it” (Mayo). Emily Dickinson, in her poem, shows the power hope has in the sense that hope empowers people to continue striving forward. “And sings the tune without the words - / And never stops - at all-” (Dickinson lines 3-4). Oftentimes it takes a lot for people to have the perseverance and determination to push through after going through one hardship after the next. Dickinson describes hope as the thing “That perches in the soul -” (Dickinson line 2). Josh Mayo points out that even Karma does not hold the power hope has (Mayo). Between Josh Mayo’s analysis and Emily Dickinson’s use of metaphors and symbolism, hope can be seen as something that is hard to break apart.

Emily Dickinson’s poem, “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers” examines what hope does for people and how it makes them feel. Dickinson portrays and examines these ideas through metaphors, symbolism, and imagery. Hope is something that stays, keeps company, and comforts people during difficult times. Dickinson says, “That perches in the soul”, referring to the way hope has a grip on our souls (Dickinson line 2). She uses a gale to symbolize a storm. During the storm she uses a metaphor to show that that is when the bird sings the loudest and hopes the most. “And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard - / And sore must be the storm - / That kept so many warm -” (Dickinson lines 5-6, 8). Line 8 is referring to the hope that keeps the bird warm during the storm. Hope allows people to have peace about and during the storm they are enduring. The third stanza of “‘Hope’ is the Thing with Feathers” ties together Dickinson’s message on hope. The stanza starts with, “I’ve heard it in the chilliest land - / And on the strangest Sea-” (Dickinson lines 9-10). This is saying that during life’s easiest moments and life’s hardest moments, hope

will still be there clinging onto our souls. There are hard moments that will test our hope, but in the end it will only make it stronger.

To conclude, Emily Dickinson's poem, "'Hope' is the Thing with Feathers" examines the power of hope and the deep influence it leaves on humans through her use of metaphors and symbolism in the poem. Kate Choi and Josh Mayo touch on how hope is our comforter that lives in humans to give continual strength and perseverance. Although hard seasons in life may cause our hope to falter, it also makes it stronger. The idea of hope and the human gain from hope has been big in society for centuries. Emily Dickinson unpacked and expressed the deep understanding of it. Although "'Hope' is the Thing with Feathers" is not a long poem, it does entail deep meanings and ideas of hope. Emily Dickinson paints a clear picture of hope, the power it holds, and what it does for humans.

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