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"Death Be Not Proud" As A Poem

'Death, Be Not Proud' is a beautiful poem, composed by John Donne. John Donne is a great metaphysical poet of English. He is deeply devoted to God and Religion. The present poem is one of the Holy Sonnets, written by the poet. Here the poet presents Death as weak and feeble. Death is generally looked upon as mighty and dreadful. But the poet's view-point is quite different. He holds that Death is neither mighty nor dreadful. It has nothing to be proud of.

John Donne puts forth his argument like a clever lawyer to make his points clear. He is of the view that Death does not kill anybody. Those who are supposed to die actually do not die. They only sleep. Rest and sleep resemble death. A tired man needs rest and sleep. Similarly, a man who has got tired of life and the world dies in order to enjoy peace and bliss.

According to the poet, death is a great source of joy. It makes man free from the bondage of the body so that he may enjoy rest. That is why the virtuous men die young. So, Death may not be regarded as dreadful.

Again, the poet says that Death is not mighty. It is not free in killing creatures. It has to work under compulsion. It acts as a slave to Fate, Chances, and wicked and malicious men. It is caused by factors such as poison, war and sickness. Death makes us enjoy a longer sleep. There are things such as opium and the drugs having magical properties that can make us sleep in a far better manner. What the poet wants to say is that Death is not free and so it is not powerful. It kills the body only; it never touches the soul. After physical death, man sleeps only for a short while. After his short sleep, his soul awakes in the other world and lives eternally. ~~There~~ Thus, the fear of Death disappears for ever.

Thus, it is a beautiful metaphysical poem. Here we find a metaphysical treatment of death. A metaphysical poem believes in the spiritual life and so, death is of little importance to a spiritual man.

This poem is a Petrarchan sonnet. The first eight lines form the Octave, and the last six lines make the Sestet. Personification of Death is felicitous here.