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CLASS 12TH ENGLISH NOTES

Unit 7: Because I could Not Stop for Death (by Emily Dickinson)

Complete Stanza Translation, Comprehensive Poem Summary, Detailed Solutions & Exercises

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Pre-Reading Questions

Q: What images or ideas come to your mind when you think about Death and immortality?

Answer: When thinking about Death, traditional images often involve fear, darkness, coldness, or an abrupt end to life's journey. However, immortality brings to mind ideas of an eternal soul, endless time, peace, and a spiritual existence beyond the physical world where time ceases to carry physical limitations.

Complete Stanza-by-Stanza English to Urdu Translation

STANZA 1

*Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.*

جو نکلے میں موت کے لیے نہیں رک سکتی تھی۔
اس نے برائے مہربانی میرے لیے سواری روک دی۔
بگھی (گاڑی) میں صرف ہم دونوں سوار تھے۔
اور ساتھ میں ابدیت (ہیشگی) تھی۔

STANZA 2

*We slowly drove – He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility –*

ہم آہستہ آہستہ آگے بڑھے۔ وہ کوئی جلدی نہیں جانتا تھا
اور میں نے بھی ایک طرف رکھ دی تھی
اپنی محنت اور اپنی فراغت بھی،
اس کی شائستگی اور اخلاق کی خاطر۔

STANZA 3

*We passed the School, where Children strove
At Recess in the Ring –
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
We passed the Setting Sun –*

ہم سکول کے پاس سے گزرے، جہاں بچے محنت و جدوجہد کر رہے تھے
تفریح (وقفے) کے وقت دائرے میں کھیلتے ہوئے۔
ہم گھورتے ہوئے (پکے ہوئے) اناج کے کھیتوں کے پاس سے گزرے۔
ہم غروب ہوتے ہوئے سورج کے پاس سے گزرے۔

STANZA 4

*Or rather – He passed Us –
The Dews drew quivering and Chill –
For only Gossamer, my Gown –
My Tippet only Tulle –*

یایوں کہیے۔ کہ سورج ہمارے پاس سے گزر گیا۔
شبہنم کے قطرے کپکپاہٹ اور ٹھنڈا لانے لگے۔
کیونکہ میرا جوڑا محض ایک باریک جالی دار کپڑا تھا۔
اور میرا شال (دوشالہ) محض ایک جالی دار ریشم تھا۔

STANZA 5

*We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground –
The Roof was scarcely visible –
The Cornice – in the Ground –*

ہم ایک ایسے گھر کے سامنے رکے جو لگتا تھا
زمین کا ایک ابھار (ٹیلہ) ہے۔
چھت بمشکل ہی نظر آرہی تھی۔
چھت کا کنارہ (سائبان)۔ زمین میں دبا ہوا تھا۔

STANZA 6

*Since then 'tis Centuries – and yet
Feels shorter than the Day*

I first surmised the Horses' Heads
Were toward Eternity –

تب سے لے کر اب تک صدیاں گزر چکی ہیں۔ اور پھر بھی
یہ اس دن سے بھی چھوٹا محسوس ہوتا ہے
جب میں نے پہلی بار اندازہ لگایا تھا کہ گھوڑوں کے رخ
ابدیت (ہیشگی) کی طرف تھے۔

Poem Summary (نظم کا خلاصہ)

Urdu Summary (اردو خلاصہ)

نظم "بکاز آئی کوڈناٹ سٹاپ فار ڈیٹھ" ایملی ڈکنسن کی ایک شاہکار نظم ہے جس میں موت کو ایک خوفناک چیز کے بجائے ایک شائستہ اور مہربان ہمسفر کے طور پر پیش کیا گیا ہے۔
شاعرہ بتاتی ہے کہ چونکہ وہ زندگی کی مصروفیات کی وجہ سے موت کے لیے وقت نہیں نکال سکتی تھی، اس لیے موت خود ایک گہمی (گاڑی) میں اس کے پاس آئی۔ اس گہمی میں
صرف شاعرہ، موت اور ابدیت (ہیشگی) سوار تھے۔

یہ سفر انتہائی آہستہ اور سکون سے شروع ہوتا ہے۔ شاعرہ موت کے اخلاق اور شائستگی کی وجہ سے اپنے تمام کام اور تفریح چھوڑ کر اس کے ساتھ چل پڑتی ہے۔ سفر کے دوران وہ
انسان کی زندگی کے مختلف مراحل سے گزرتے ہیں: پہلے وہ سکول کے پاس سے گزرتے ہیں جو بچپن کو ظاہر کرتا ہے، پھر پکے ہوئے اناج کے کھیتوں کے پاس سے گزرتے ہیں جو
جوانی اور پختگی کی علامت ہیں، اور آخر میں غروب ہوتے سورج سے گزرتے ہیں جو بڑھاپے اور زندگی کے اختتام کو ظاہر کرتا ہے۔

سورج غروب ہونے کے بعد شاعرہ کو ٹھنڈا احساس ہوتا ہے کیونکہ اس کا لباس بہت باریک تھا، جو کہ جسمانی حواس کی کمزوری اور روح کی لافانی حالت کو ظاہر کرتا ہے۔ اس کے
بعد گہمی ایک ایسے گھر کے سامنے رکتی ہے جو زمین کا ایک ابھار لگتا ہے۔ یہ اصل میں اس کی قبر ہے۔ نظم کے آخری بند میں شاعرہ بتاتی ہے کہ اس واقعے کو صدیاں گزر چکی ہیں
لیکن ابدیت میں وقت کی کوئی اہمیت نہیں ہوتی، اس لیے یہ صدیاں اس ایک دن سے بھی چھوٹی لگتی ہیں جب اسے پہلی بار معلوم ہوا تھا کہ اس کے سفر کا رخ ابدیت کی طرف
ہے۔

English Summary

"Because I could Not Stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson is a personified exploration of mortality, presenting Death as a courteous and patient gentleman taking the speaker on a peaceful carriage ride toward eternity[cite: 9]. Because the speaker was too occupied with her daily routine to pause for Death, Death kindly stops to pick her up, accompanied by "Immortality."

The carriage moves at a slow, unhurried pace. In deference to Death's civility, the speaker sets aside both her work and leisure. As they travel, they pass through three distinct stages of human existence: a schoolyard where children play (representing childhood), fields of mature grain (representing adult life and productivity), and the setting sun (symbolizing old age and the end of life).

After the sun sets, a sudden chill settles, revealing that the speaker is dressed only in thin, delicate garments, symbolizing the transition away from physical warmth and life. They finally stop before her new "House"—a mound in the earth representing her grave. Centuring on timelessness, the speaker concludes by reflecting that although centuries have passed since that day, the infinite passage of time feels shorter than the single moment she realized the horses were heading toward Eternity.

While-Reading Questions & Answers

Q1: What does this poem tell us about the poet's attitude toward Death?

Answer: The poem reveals that the poet views Death not as a terrifying or cruel enemy, but as a polite, calm, and civilized companion who gently facilitates a natural transition from temporal life to eternity[cite: 9].

Q2: How does the description of the cold and delicate clothing reflect the speaker's experience of the journey with Death?

Answer: The delicate clothing ("Gossamer gown" and "Tulle tippet") and the shivering cold represent the loss of physical warmth and earthly protection, underscoring the speaker's vulnerability as her body dies and her spirit enters the cold realm of the grave.

Q3: Why does the speaker say that centuries feel shorter than a day, and what does this reveal about her perception of eternity?

Answer: The speaker states centuries feel shorter than a day because in the afterlife, mortal time loses all meaning[cite: 9]. This reveals her perception that eternity is timeless and infinite, contrasting sharply with the structured, finite time of earthly existence[cite: 9].

Theme & About the Author

Theme

The poem explores death as an inevitable, calm transition rather than a frightening end[cite: 9]. Through the allegory of a peaceful carriage ride, Dickinson highlights the stages of human life and shows that mortality is a natural gateway to immortality, where earthly time dissolves into timeless existence[cite: 9].

About the Poetess

Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) was an iconic American poet known for her reclusive lifestyle and unconventional, pioneering poetic voice[cite: 9]. Writing nearly 1,800 poems characterized by slant rhymes, short lines, and prominent dashes, her work deeply explores themes of death, immortality, nature, and the human soul[cite: 9].

Vocabulary Glossary

Word	English Meaning	Urdu Meaning (اردو معنی)
Cornice	The top edge or decorative border of a building	چھت کا کنارہ / سائبان
Eternity	Endless time; life that has no end	ابدیت / ہمیشگی
Haste	Great speed or hurry	عجلت / جلدی

Word	English Meaning	Urdu Meaning (اردو معنی)
Immortality	The state of living forever, never dying	بقائے دوام / لافانیت
Leisure	Free time when one is not working	فراغت / تفریح
Quivering	Shaking or trembling slightly	کپکپاہٹ / تھرتھراہٹ
Scarcely	Hardly; almost not	بمشکل / شاذ و نادر
Strove	Tried very hard; struggled	مخت کی / جدوجہد کی
Surmised	Guessed or understood without full proof	اندازہ لگایا / قیاس کیا

Reading & Critical Thinking Exercises

A. Comprehension Questions & Answers

1. Who kindly stops for the speaker in the poem?

Answer: Death, personified as a polite gentleman driver, kindly stops for the speaker in his carriage[cite: 9].

2. What does the carriage symbolize in the poem?

Answer: The carriage symbolizes the journey of life passing into death and moving toward eternity[cite: 9].

3. How does the speaker describe the pace of the journey with Death?

Answer: The speaker describes the pace as slow, unhurried, and calm, noting that Death "knew no haste."

4. Which places do they pass on their journey, and what might each represent?

Answer: They pass:

- **The School:** Represents childhood and youth.
- **Fields of Gazing Grain:** Represents adulthood, maturity, and productivity.
- **The Setting Sun:** Represents old age, decline, and the end of physical life.

5. How is the school described, and what could it symbolize about life?

Answer: The school is described as a place where children "strove at recess in the ring." It symbolizes the early, active, and competitive phase of human life.

6. What imagery does Dickinson use to describe the fields of grain?

Answer: Dickinson uses the phrase "Fields of Gazing Grain," personifying the fully grown crops as standing still and staring at the passing carriage.

7. How is the setting sun described, and what could it signify in the poem?

Answer: The setting sun is described as passing by them ("Or rather – He passed Us"), signifying the departure of light and physical warmth, symbolizing the final boundary between life and death.

8. What does the "House that seemed a Swelling of the Ground" represent?

Answer: It represents a grave, where the burial mound forms a swell in the earth and the roof/cornice lies beneath or at ground level.

9. How does the speaker describe her clothing, and what effect does it create?

Answer: She describes her gown as "Gossamer" and her tippet as "Tulle" (both thin, delicate fabrics). This creates an effect of vulnerability, coldness, and loss of bodily protection during the mortal transition.

10. How does the poem convey the idea of time passing differently after death?

Answer: The poem states that centuries have passed since the carriage ride, yet it feels shorter than a single day, illustrating that in eternity, chronological earthly time ceases to exist[cite: 9].

B. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

#	Question	Options	Correct Answer
1	Who accompanies the speaker in the carriage besides Death?	a) a child b) a friend c) immortality d) a teacher	c) immortality
2	What does the "setting sun" most likely symbolize?	a) morning b) birth c) the end of life d) happiness	c) the end of life
3	What kind of journey is described in the poem?	a) a joyful trip b) a journey to school c) a journey from life to death d) a journey through a city	c) a journey from life to death
4	How is Death portrayed in the poem?	a) frightening and cruel b) kind and polite c) angry and loud d) weak and helpless	b) kind and polite
5	What does the "house" in the ground represent?	a) a palace b) a school c) a grave d) a garden	c) a grave

Vocabulary and Grammar Exercises

Parts of Speech Analysis

Parts of speech classify words based on their function within a sentence (Noun, Pronoun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction, Interjection)[cite: 9].

Example Sentence Breakdown: "The happy child quickly ran to the park."

- **The:** Article / Determiner
- **happy:** Adjective (modifies 'child')
- **child:** Noun (subject)
- **quickly:** Adverb (modifies 'ran')
- **ran:** Verb (action)
- **to:** Preposition
- **the park:** Noun phrase (object of preposition)

Oral Communication Skills

Dramatic Techniques Exercise

A. Identify the dramatic technique used in the following situation: "A character shares its private thoughts aloud while alone on stage."

Answer: The dramatic technique used is a **Soliloquy**[cite: 9].

Writing Skills Exercises

Argumentative Writing

A. Write a short argument of 3 to 4 sentences on the topic: "Students should have homework every day." [cite: 9]

Argumentative Response:

Daily homework reinforces classroom concepts, encourages independent study habits, and keeps students engaged with academic material on a regular basis. Research demonstrates that consistent practice improves retention and academic performance across key subjects. Therefore, assigning moderate, targeted homework every day is essential for comprehensive educational development.

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