

**SALIENT THEMES IN EMILY DICKINSON'S
SELECTED POEMS**

THESIS

BY

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**MASTER'S PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
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**Submitted to the
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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I, the undersigned, certify that the thesis entitled **SALIENT THEMES IN EMILY DICKINSON'S SELECTED POEMS** is the result of my own work and has never been submitted for any other degrees, professional qualifications or other purposes beyond the Degree of Magister Sastra at Master's Program in English Literature, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, Medan. No part of this thesis is quoted without specifying the sources. Anything pertaining to quotation or computer software application in writing this thesis or any other things tied to Hak Atas Kekayaan Intelektual (HAKI) 'Intellectual Property Rights together with its legal consequences likely resulted, is upon mw own responsibility.

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL SHEET	2
STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Problem Identification	4
1.3 Objective	5
1.4 Scope	5
1.5 Significance	6
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Expressive Criticism	7
2.2 Theme	9
2.3 Themes of Emily Dickinson’s Poetry	11
2.3.1 Love	13
2.3.2 Nature	15
2.3.3 Death	16
2.3.4 Suffering	18
2.4 Review of Related Literature	19
2.4.1 An Overview of Emily Dickinson’s Notable Poems.	19
2.4.2 Emily Dickinson as a Poet.	20
2.4.3 Recurrent Themes in Emily Dickinson’s Poetry.	21
CHAPTER III: METHOD OF RESEARCH	24
3.1 Research Design	24
3.2 Source of Data	24
3.3 Data Collection Procedure	25
3.4 Data Analysis Procedures	25
CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	27
4.1 Analysis	27
4.1.1 Love	27
4.1.2 Nature	38
4.1.3 Death	49
4.1.4 Suffering	58

4.2	Findings	69
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION		71
5.1	Conclusion	71
5.2	Recommendation	71
REFERENCES.....		73
APPENDIX.....		76

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APPENDIX

I. EMILY DICKINSON'S POEMS OF LOVE

1.

You left me – Sire – two Legacies –
A Legacy of Love
A Heavenly Father would suffice
Had He the offer of –

You left me Boundaries of Pain –
Capacious as the Sea –
Between Eternity and Time –
Your Consciousness – and me –

2.

A solemn thing — it was — I said —
A woman — white — to be —
And wear — if God should count me fit —
Her blameless mystery —

A hallowed thing — to drop a life
Into the purple well —
Too plummetless — that it return —
Eternity — until —

I pondered how the bliss would look —
And would it feel as big —
When I could take it in my hand —
As hovering — seen — through fog —

And then — the size of this "small" life —
The Sages — call it small —
Swelled — like Horizons — in my vest —
And I sneered — softly — "small"!

3.

We outgrow love like other things
And put it in the drawer,
Till it an antique fashion shows
Like costumes grandsires wore

4.

Love — is anterior to Life —

Posterior — to Death —

Initial of Creation, and

The Exponent of Breath —

5.

I live with Him — I see His face —

I go no more away

For Visitor — or Sundown —

Death's single privacy

The Only One — forestalling Mine —

And that — by Right that He

Presents a Claim invisible —

No wedlock — granted Me —

I live with Him — I hear His Voice —

I stand alive — Today —

To witness to the Certainty

Of Immortality —

Taught Me — by Time — the lower Way —

Conviction — Every day —

That Life like This — is stopless —

Be Judgment — what it may —

6.

That I did always love

I bring thee Proof

That till I loved

I never lived—Enough—

That I shall love alway—

I argue thee

That love is life—

And life hath Immortality—

This—dost thou doubt—Sweet—

Then have I

Nothing to show
But Calvary—

7.

Elysium is as far as to

The very nearest Room
If in that Room a Friend await
Felicity or Doom--

What fortitude the Soul contains
That it can so endure
The accent of a coming Foot--
The opening of a Door—

8.

She rose to his requirement, dropped

The playthings of her life
To take the honorable work
Of woman and of wife.

If aught she missed in her new day
Of amplitude, or awe,
Or first prospective, or the gold
In using wore away,

It lay unmentioned, as the sea
Develops pearl and weed,
But only to himself is known
The fathoms they abide.

9.

The Rose did caper on her cheek—

Her Bodice rose and fell—
Her pretty speech—like drunken men—
Did stagger pitiful—

Her fingers fumbled at her work—
Her needle would not go—
What ailed so smart a little Maid—
It puzzled me to know—

Till opposite—I spied a cheek

That bore another Rose—
Just opposite—Another speech
That like the Drunkard goes—

A Vest that like her Bodice, danced—
To the immortal tune—
Till those two troubled—little Clocks
Ticked softly into one.

10.

I gave myself to Him—
And took Himself, for Pay,
The solemn contract of a Life
Was ratified, this way—

The Wealth might disappoint—
Myself a poorer prove
Than this great Purchaser suspect,
The Daily Own—of Love

Depreciate the Vision—
But till the Merchant buy—
Still Fable—in the Isles of Spice—
The subtle Cargoes—lie—

At least—'tis Mutual—Risk—
Some—found it—Mutual Gain—
Sweet Debt of Life—Each Night to owe—
Insolvent—every Noon—

II. EMILY DICKINSON'S POEMS OF NATURE

1.

The Bat is dun, with wrinkled Wings —
Like fallow Article —
And not a song pervade his Lips —
Or none perceptible.

His small Umbrella quaintly halved
Describing in the Air

An Arc alike inscrutable
Elate Philosopher.

Deputed from what Firmament —
Of what Astute Abode —
Empowered with what Malignity
Auspiciously withheld —

To his adroit Creator
Acribe no less the praise —
Beneficent, believe me,
His Eccentricities —

2.
A Bird came down the Walk—
He did not know I saw—
He bit an Angeworm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw,

And then he drank a Dew
From a convenient Grass—
And then hopped sidewise to the Wall
To let a Beetle pass—

He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all around—
They looked like frightened Beads, I thought—
He stirred his Velvet Head

Like one in danger, Cautious,
I offered him a Crumb
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home—

Than Oars divide the Ocean,
Too silver for a seam—
Or Butterflies, off Banks of Noon
Leap, plashless as they swim.

3.

It sounded as if the Streets were running

And then - the Streets stood still -
Eclipse - was all we could see at the Window
And Awe - was all we could feel.

By and by - the boldest stole out of his Covert
To see if Time was there -
Nature was in an Opal Apron,
Mixing fresher Air

4.

As imperceptibly as Grief

The Summer lapsed away —
Too imperceptible at last
To seem like Perfidy —
A Quietness distilled
As Twilight long begun,
Or Nature spending with herself
Sequestered Afternoon —
The Dusk drew earlier in —
The Morning foreign shone —
A courteous, yet harrowing Grace,
As Guest, that would be gone —
And thus, without a Wing
Or service of a Keel
Our Summer made her light escape
Into the Beautiful.

5.

What mystery pervades a well!

That water lives so far —
A neighbor from another world
Residing in a jar

Whose limit none have ever seen,
But just his lid of glass —
Like looking every time you please
In an abyss's face!

The grass does not appear afraid,
I often wonder he
Can stand so close and look so bold
At what is awe to me.

Related somehow they may be,
The sedge stands next the sea —
Where he is floorless
And does no timidity betray

But nature is a stranger yet;
The ones that cite her most
Have never passed her haunted house,
Nor simplified her ghost.

To pity those that know her not
Is helped by the regret
That those who know her, know her less
The nearer her they get.

6.

Further in Summer than the Birds –
Pathetic from the Grass –
A minor Nation celebrates
It's unobtrusive Mass.

No Ordinance be seen –
So gradual the Grace
A gentle Custom it becomes –
Enlarging Loneliness –

Antiquiest felt at Noon –
When August burning low
Arise this spectral Canticle
Repose to typify –

Remit as yet no Grace –
No furrow on the Glow,
But a Druidic Difference
Enhances Nature now –

7.

Summer has two Beginnings—
Beginning once in June—
Beginning in October

Affectingly again—

Without, perhaps, the Riot
But graphicker for Grace—
As finer is a going
Than a remaining Face—

Departing then—forever—
Forever—until May—
Forever is deciduous
Except to those who die—

8.

These are the days when Birds come back --

A very few -- a Bird or two --
To take a backward look.

These are the days when skies resume
The old -- old sophistries of June --
A blue and gold mistake.

Oh fraud that cannot cheat the Bee --
Almost thy plausibility
Induces my belief.

Till ranks of seeds their witness bear --
And softly thro' the altered air
Hurries a timid leaf.

Oh Sacrament of summer days,
Oh Last Communion in the Haze --
Permit a child to join.

Thy sacred emblems to partake --
They consecrated bread to take
And thine immortal wine!

9.

A little Madness in the Spring

Is wholesome even for the King,
But God be with the Clown --
Who ponders this tremendous scene --
This whole Experiment of Green --
As if it were his own!

10.

Spring is the Period

Express from God.

Among the other seasons

Himself abide,

But during March and April

None stir abroad

Without a cordial interview

With God.

11.

I think the Hemlock likes to stand

Upon a Marge of Snow—

It suits his own Austerity—

And satisfies an awe

That men, must slake in Wilderness—

And in the Desert—cloy—

An instinct for the Hoar, the Bald—

Lapland's—necessity—

The Hemlock's nature thrives—on cold—

The Gnash of Northern winds

Is sweetest nutriment—to him—

His best Norwegian Wines —

To satin Races—he is nought—

But Children on the Don,

Beneath his Tabernacles, play,

And Dnieper Wrestlers, run.

12.

Apparently with no surprise

To any happy Flower

The Frost beheads it at it's play –

In accidental power –

The blonde Assassin passes on –

The Sun proceeds unmoved

To measure off another Day

For an Approving God –

13.

A Visitor in Marl —
Who influences Flowers —
Till they are orderly as Busts —
And Elegant — as Glass —

Who visits in the Night —
And just before the Sun —
Concludes his glistening interview —
Caresses — and is gone —

But whom his fingers touched —
And where his feet have run —
And whatsoever Mouth be kissed —
Is as it had not been —

III. EMILY DICKINSON'S POEMS OF DEATH

1.

Color – Caste – Denomination –
These – are Time's Affair –
Death's diviner Classifying
Does not know they are –

As in sleep – all Hue forgotten –
Tenets – put behind –
Death's large – Democratic fingers
Rub away the Brand –

If Circassian – He is careless –
If He put away
Chrysalis of Blonde – or Umber –
Equal Butterfly –

They emerge from His Obscuring –
What Death – knows so well –
Our minuter intuitions –
Deem unplausible –

2.

Because I could not stop for Death—

He kindly stopped for me—
The Carriage held but just Ourselves—
And Immortality.

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

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

Or rather—He passed us—
The Dews drew quivering and chill—
For only Gossamer, my Gown—
My Tippet—only Tulle—

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

Since then—'tis Centuries—and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses' Heads
Were toward Eternity—

3.

Death is the supple Suitor

That wins at last —
It is a stealthy Wooing
Conducted first
By pallid innuendoes
And dim approach
But brave at last with Bugles
And a bisected Coach
It bears away in triumph
To Troth unknown
And Kindred as responsive
As Porcelain.

4.

A Clock stopped —

Not the Mantel's —
Geneva's farthest skill
Can't put the puppet bowing —
That just now dangled still —

An awe came on the Trinket!
The Figures hunched, with pain —
Then quivered out of Decimals —
Into Degreeless Noon —

It will not stir for Doctors —
This Pendulum of snow —
The Shopman importunes it —
While cool — concernless No —

Nods from the Gilded pointers —
Nods from the Seconds slim —
Decades of Arrogance between
The Dial life —
And Him —

5.

They dropped like Flakes —

They dropped like Stars —
Like Petals from a Rose —
When suddenly across the June
A wind with fingers — goes —

They perished in the Seamless Grass —
No eye could find the place —
But God can summon every face
Of his Repealless — List.

6.

Not any higher stands the Grave

For Heroes than for Men —
Not any nearer for the Child
Than numb Three Score and Ten —

This latest Leisure equal lulls
The Beggar and his Queen

Propitiate this Democrat
A Summer's Afternoon —

7.

The only Ghost I ever saw

Was dressed in Mechlin — so —
He wore no sandal on his foot —
And stepped like flakes of snow —

His Gait — was soundless, like the Bird —
But rapid — like the Roe —
His fashions, quaint, Mosaic —
Or haply, Mistletoe —

His conversation — seldom —
His laughter, like the Breeze —
That dies away in Dimples
Among the pensive Trees —

Our interview — was transient —
Of me, himself was shy —
And God forbid I look behind —
Since that appalling Day!

8.

All but Death, can be Adjusted —

Dynasties repaired —
Systems — settled in their Sockets —
Citadels — dissolved —

Wastes of Lives — resown with Colors
By Succeeding Springs —
Death — unto itself — Exception —
Is exempt from Change —

9.

What care the Dead, for Chanticleer —

What care the Dead for Day?
'Tis late your Sunrise vex their face —
And Purple Ribaldry — of Morning

Pour as blank on them

As on the Tier of Wall
The Mason builded, yesterday,
And equally as cool —

What care the Dead for Summer?
The Solstice had no Sun
Could waste the Snow before their Gate —
And knew One Bird a Tune —

Could thrill their Mortised Ear
Of all the Birds that be —
This One — beloved of Mankind
Henceforward cherished be —

What care the Dead for Winter?
Themselves as easy freeze —
June Noon — as January Night —
As soon the South — her Breeze

Of Sycamore — or Cinnamon —
Deposit in a Stone
And put a Stone to keep it Warm —
Give Spices — unto Men —

IV. EMILY DICKINSON'S POEMS OF SUFFERING

1.

Joy to have merited the Pain —
To merit the Release —
Joy to have perished every step —
To Compass Paradise —

Pardon — to look upon thy face —
With these old fashioned Eyes —
Better than new — could be — for that —
Though bought in Paradise —

Because they looked on thee before —
And thou hast looked on them —
Prove Me — My Hazel Witnesses
The features are the same —

So fleet thou wert, when present —
So infinite — when gone —
An Orient's Apparition —
Remanded of the Morn —

The Height I recollect —
'Twas even with the Hills —
The Depth upon my Soul was notched —
As Floods — on Whites of Wheels —

To Haunt — till Time have dropped
His last Decade away,
And Haunting actualize — to last
At least — Eternity —

2.

Are Friends Delight or Pain?

Could Bounty but remain
Riches were good —

But if they only stay
Ampler to fly away
Riches are sad.

3.

The hallowing of Pain

Like hallowing of Heaven,
Obtains at a corporeal cost —
The Summit is not given

To Him who strives severe
At middle of the Hill —
But He who has achieved the Top —
All — is the price of All —

4.

Pain — expands the Time —

Ages coil within

The minute Circumference
Of a single Brain —

Pain contracts — the Time —
Occupied with Shot
Gamuts of Eternities
Are as they were not —

5.

If pain for peace prepares

Lo, what "Augustan" years
Our feet await!

If springs from winter rise,
Can the Anemones
Be reckoned up?

If night stands fast — then noon
To gird us for the sun,
What gaze!

When from a thousand skies
On our developed eyes
Noons blaze!

6.

After great pain, a formal feeling comes —

The Nerves sit ceremonious, like Tombs —
The stiff Heart questions was it He, that bore,
And Yesterday, or Centuries before?

The Feet, mechanical, go round —
A Wooden Way
Of Ground, or Air, or Ought —
Regardless grown,
A Quartz contentment, like a stone —

This is the Hour of Lead —
Remembered, if outlived,
As Freezing persons, recollect the Snow —
First — Chill — then Stupor — then the letting go —

7.

There is a pain — so utter —
It swallows substance up —
Then covers the Abyss with Trance —
So Memory can step
Around — across — upon it —
As one within a Swoon —
Goes safely — where an open eye —
Would drop Him — Bone by Bone.

8.

I cried at Pity — not at Pain —
I heard a Woman say
"Poor Child" — and something in her voice
Convicted me — of me —

So long I fainted, to myself
It seemed the common way,
And Health, and Laughter, Curious things —
To look at, like a Toy —

To sometimes hear "Rich people" buy
And see the Parcel rolled —
And carried, I supposed — to Heaven,
For children, made of Gold —

But not to touch, or wish for,
Or think of, with a sigh —
And so and so — had been to me,
Had God willed differently.

I wish I knew that Woman's name —
So when she comes this way,
To hold my life, and hold my ears
For fear I hear her say

She's "sorry I am dead" — again —
Just when the Grave and I —
Have sobbed ourselves almost to sleep,
Our only Lullaby —

9.

To learn the Transport by the Pain

As Blind Men learn the sun!

To die of thirst — suspecting

That Brooks in Meadows run!

To stay the homesick — homesick feet

Upon a foreign shore —

Haunted by native lands, the while —

And blue — beloved air!

This is the Sovereign Anguish!

This — the signal woe!

These are the patient "Laureates"

Whose voices — trained — below —

Ascend in ceaseless Carol —

Inaudible, indeed,

To us — the duller scholars

Of the Mysterious Bard!