



RESEARCH ARTICLE

**SOUL LONGING FOR AGAPE LOVE IN THE POEM
"REMEMBER" BY CHRISTINA ROSETTI**

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*(Assistant Professor of English, Sri Vasavi Engineering College, Tadepalligudem, Andhra Pradesh.)*Email chandupaulganta@gmail.comDoi: <https://doi.org/10.54513/JOELL.2023.10111>**ABSTRACT**

"Literature is the art of discovering something extraordinary about ordinary people and saying with ordinary words something extraordinary." says -*Boris Pasternak*. Several literary works engage readers deeply by the narratives they tell or the messages they convey. Readers are consistently motivated by biographies of notable people as well as true tales of bravery, selflessness, and other admirable traits. Such books act as both a bible of values and a window into the life of notable people for the general public. The main types of literature: *Drama, Fable, Autobiography, Biography, Poetry, Prose, Science Fiction, and Journalistic Literature*. Poetry is a great motivator when we try to learn it. It is rich in tradition, culture and language and gives a great opportunity to learn a language. The main function of poetry is to interpret life. There are poets who have pictured death as both a friend and an enemy. Some claim that passing away can provide relief from troubles and anguish, while others claim that it is cruel and robs a person of the fun and pleasure the world has to offer. In this paper, an attempt has been made to present Christina Rossetti's longingness to be remembered even after death that separates her from her lover in the poem "Remember".

Keywords: *Literature, Poetry, Death, Remember.*



INTRODUCTION

“Literature makes us better thinkers. It moves us to see the multi-sidedness of situations and therefore expands the breadth of our own visions, moving us towards dreams and solutions we might not otherwise have imagined.” – Judith Langer, *Envisioning Literature*. Those who study literature get an understanding of the value of language and its impact. Through the texts they read, they make journey to many eras and worlds. They get the ability to identify with characters' joys and suffering. “Literature is the art of discovering something extraordinary about ordinary people and saying with ordinary words something extraordinary.” Says - *Boris Pasternak*. . Several literary works engage readers deeply by the narratives they tell or the messages they convey. The feelings depicted in these works often cause readers to identify with them and get emotionally invested in them. So, literature has a profound effect on readers' thoughts and lives. One learns about life by reading excellent literary and poetic works. They enable one to examine life's various features more closely. In many ways, literature, in all of its forms, can alter one's outlook

We have a beautiful quote by Hannah Arendt, “Poetry, whose material is language, is perhaps the most human and least worldly of the arts, the one in which the end product remains closest to the thought that inspired it”. Poetry is a great motivator when we try to learn it. It is rich in tradition, culture and language and gives a great opportunity to learn language. The main function of poetry is to interpret life. Without poetry science becomes incomplete. The strongest part of our religion is its unconscious poetry. Throughout the

history of Literature we come across many poems dealing with the theme of death. One of the phenomena and universal topics is death. Regardless of one's ethnicity, religion, or creed, everyone will have to deal with it. There are poets who have pictured death as both a friend and an enemy. Some claim that passing away can provide relief from troubles and anguish, while others claim that it is cruel and robs a person of the fun and pleasure the world has to offer.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI A PRE-RAPHAELITE

Christina Rossetti was raised as a devout Anglican and was born in London in 1830. Her early years were extremely cheerful and free of any difficulties because she was the youngest kid of a very talented and loving family. She had three brothers and sisters, which was nearly unheard of at the time for women, and she also went to a very good school. Her sister Maria was a well-known Dante scholar, her brother William pursued a career in art and literary criticism, and her brother Dante Gabriel Rossetti established himself as an excellent painter and poet. The majority of Christina Rossetti's poetry revolved around a variety of themes, from love, death, to changing seasons. She is also widely renowned for using sparse visual imagery in her poetry. She allowed her thoughts to stand on their own. She may occasionally be mistakenly associated with the women's suffrage movement, although she always valued her position in life and thought that women's rights and Christianity were incompatible. Although rumoured to have spent some time alone, Christina is claimed to have passed away in 1894 as a well-known poet.



The poems on death hint at Christina's ambivalent, contradictory views on dying. Throughout her poetry, she desired and sought death for a variety of reasons that cannot be summed up in a single formula. Her desire to die was one of her many, whether or not religious, human impulses. The varied reasons for her dying wish only serve to demonstrate how a poet with such a delicate, sensitive mind could combine her hope and her unhappiness into one longing. The majority of her poetry on death, however, has a hesitant or sceptical tone that contrasts with her picture of the afterlife or death desire. The poetry on dying, as they appear Christina seems to reflect her many contradicting opinions on dashed hopes and wishes in her negative outlook on the world. The majority of her religious poetry appear to express her devout wish to abandon her current existence as she waits to be reconciled with Christ on Judgment Day.

The Romantic era inspired Christina Rossetti to write the poem "Remember." Although the Romantic era is most known for the works of Keats, Byron, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Blake, and Shelley, there existed a smaller group of poets who were influenced by the Romantics and called for equal recognition. They were the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a group who enjoyed Romantic acclaim and created art that has recently attracted new appreciation. Although it has long been assumed that all Pre-Raphaelites were depressed, death-obsessed, and wretched at all times, this couldn't be further from the truth. The Pre-Raphaelites are frequently depicted in popular culture as poets who were withering away from overindulgence and excessive

drinking. The other was Christina Rossetti, who was unique.

THE POEM "REMEMBER"

The tenet of "memento mori," which means "remember that you will die," served as the foundation for much of romantic writing. As a result, readers will discover references to mortality in all its manifestations and capacities throughout many works from the time. They rejected the notion of scientific reading as Romantics and centred almost entirely on death as a journey or a figurehead, and the act of dying as something with inherent value. This structure is also present in "Remember" by Christina Rossetti. Remember is a lovely sonnet written by Christina Rossetti, a well-known Victorian-era English poet well recognised for her children's, devotional, and romantic works.

This poem, one of Rossetti's most well-known pieces, explores the concepts of love, death, and loss and is an expression of how Rossetti dealt with the sadness of losing someone who was very dear to her. Although she wrote this poem in 1849, when she was only 19 years old, it wasn't until her first collection of poems, "Goblin Market and Other Poems," was published in 1862 that it was made public. The speaker of the poem, who is likely Rossetti herself, imagines the moment after her own passing, addresses her loved one, and implores them to remember her in spite of the fact that her passing will divide them. She implores him to keep her in mind at all times. He must remember her despite the fact that his memory of her is beginning to wane. She commands him to remember her firmly and possessively. Surprisingly, however, the speaker



permits her lover to speak. In this timeless Victorian poetry on love and loss, the poet begs her beloved to remember her when she passes away. If he does, she still wants him to remember her. She begged him not to feel bad, but to cherish the memory of all the enjoyable occasions they had shared. She is content in the knowledge that she has had a lasting impact on his life and that he is content and at peace, even though it is possible that he will forget her when she is gone. She expresses joy at her passing and requests that her loved ones keep her memory alive. But the sestet's twist is startling. She commands her loved one to remember her from the very beginning of the poem, but when she realizes that she will gradually be forgotten, she lets him forget and smiles. She only stipulates that the loved one must continue to be shielded from the evils and corruption of society.

The poem has some characteristics of that era because it was written during the Victorian era, which is best known for its mourning literature. People would grieve even for the passing of the fictional characters in Charles Dickens' Little Nell during that time period. For forty years, Queen Victoria herself grieved the loss of her husband. Rossetti also addresses the subject of death, life, mourning, and going on with one's life even after the passing of a loved one. She explicitly commands her lover to mourn her death by remembering her at all costs. But her clever reworking of the poem's concluding line gives the lover the option of forgetting her and continuing to be joyful rather than remembering her and becoming depressed over her passing.

The speaker's worry that she would be easily forgotten is reinforced by the poem's repeated use of

the word "remember." The expressions "gone away," "gone far away," and "quiet land" are used to denote death. She attempts to illustrate the irreversible separation between life and death by focusing so intently on death. She wants to reassure her loved ones that remembering each other will keep them close even when death separates them. Although she feels acceptance of death in this place, she is not terrified of death. She expresses joy at her passing and requests that her loved ones keep her memory alive.

The poem's repeated use of the word "remember" supports the speaker's concern that she would be readily forgotten. Death is indicated by the phrases "gone away," "gone far away," and "quiet country." By concentrating so intently on mortality, she tries to show how life and death are irreversibly separated. She wishes to reassure her loved ones that even after death separates them, remembering each other will keep them close. She is not afraid of mortality, despite the fact that she accepts death here. She expresses happiness at her demise and asks that her loved ones preserve her remembrance. The very first sentence of the poem, where she refers to being "gone away," contains the first instance of this. The reader can infer she is not referring to a trip thanks to the "silent land" reference in the second sentence. She is also requesting to be remembered, which is something that most people desire after their time on Earth has come to a close.

*Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;*

She carries on with the idea of being linked to her lover as well. Two individuals in a relationship frequently and sincerely enjoy holding hands. Her



beloved will no longer be able to do this if she has gone away. The next line appears to be a reference to her wishing to live even though she was on the verge of death. She probably wants to spend more time with her significant other, whether it's for a short while or longer. Even when a future together can no longer be anticipated, the speaker begs her loved one to remember her. She doesn't want to be left behind and neglected in the past. The phrase "day by day" emphasises how near the speaker is to her beloved. Their exchange of those remarks demonstrates their close relationship. She wouldn't want any of that to be forgotten or reduced to a distant recollection.

Remember me when no more day by day

You tell me of our future that you plann'd:

The speaker clarifies that in the end, what matters is how people remember her. Nothing her love says or does will matter at some point in the future. In other words, she is going to die soon. She desires that the emphasis be placed on creating a sort of afterlife for her through recollection. She is aware of her beloved's emotions even though she has made it obvious that she wants to be remembered. She is aware that there can be times when she is not given much or any thought at all. "Do not grieve," she admonishes. This implies that the subject of her adoration, most likely a romantic partner, need not feel bad if and when this occurs. The stress on the remaining partner is consequently lessened.

Yet if you should forget me for a while.

And afterwards remember, do not grieve

The word yet introduces a change in her attitude. It is reinforced by the replacement of 'remember' with

'forget'. She is expecting a time in life where he won't remember her during struggles. So, she tells that 'forget me for awhile 'and remember after some time .So, in the beginning of this poem she asked "Remember me" it changed into Remember" in the third stanza it truly defines her selfless and undying love towards her lover. It's possible that the "darkness and corruption" refers to her dying and the pain it caused. The speaker is well aware that losing a loved one is an incredibly trying moment. She wants her beloved to not worry about remembering her even though she hopes she won't be forgotten. In this context, a remnant refers to a record of the ideas she has expressed throughout her life, including any memories. On a lovely and selfless note, the poem concludes. Despite the speaker seems very worried about keeping her memories alive throughout the poem, she begins to think of her beloved at the end. Even though she hates being forgotten, she considers it preferable to watching a loved one suffer. This highlights the speaker's compassionate and unselfish side while also emphasising the love she feels.

Better by far you should forget and smile

Than that you should remember and be sad

CONCLUSION

Throughout this poem author talk about physical life but in my perspective Rossetti talks about spirituality. I am not emphasizing on pragmatics here but, 'Remember me' is a heartfelt word for a soulful relation. According to Christianity when Jesus was on the cross one of the thieves requested him with these words 'Remember me' when you come into your kingdom. The speaker repeatedly requests her beloved one to remember



her even after her death. Though at one point she says remember and yet forget because she does not want her lover to be sad remembering her, because love is something beyond this physical and materialistic world. Two contradictory feelings run in the mind of the speaker. She longs to be remembered and at the same time doesn't want her lover to be sad remembering her. She is afraid that if her beloved one forgets her after her death it pains her more, because she doesn't want to be separated from her beloved even in their memories. This beautiful contrast brings a true beauty and charm to the poem.

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