**Holy Sonnets: Death, be not proud**

**By** [**John Donne**](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/john-donne)

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;

For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow

Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,

Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,

And soonest our best men with thee do go,

Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,

And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,

And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well

And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?

One short sleep past, we wake eternally

And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

1. Who is the poem addressed to?
2. Which pronoun does Donne use and why?
3. What does Donne compare death to in the early part of the poem? Summarise his argument here.
4. What does Donne say is more powerful than death?
5. What do you think ‘poppy or charms’ are and how does he use them in his argument?
6. What argument does Donne produce at the end of the poem?

7. How does the cesura function in the last line ?