



The grief dimensions in Marie Howe's "What the Living Do"

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to discuss how grief is being expressed in literary works particularly in contemporary poems. Grief is a universal feeling that a person felt when facing distressful or traumatic events in life such as the death the loved ones. There are various ways that a person does to deal with grief, one of them is through literature more specifically by writing a poem. One genre in literature which narrates the surviving grievance is called Grief Account. Marie Howe is one of the most prolific contemporary American poets who experience grievance and use her poems to deal with the emotion. One of her poems that best represent the grief account genre is entitled "What the Living Do" which was published in 1997 and is used as the research object of this paper. The concept of Grief Dimensions by Michael Robert Dennis was drawn on to identify and analyse the aspects of grief that are present in the poem. Dennis suggests that there are six grief dimensions namely *restorative*, *evaluative*, *interpretive*, *affirmative*, *affective*, and *transformative*. The analysis was conducted qualitatively by implementing descriptive method as well as formalism approach to examine various grief imageries and symbolisms present in the poem. The paper found that all of Dennis' six dimensions of grief are present in Howe's "What the Living Do" which shows how the poem manage to express multiple facets of grievance in multiple ways despite its short length. For future research, it is possible to develop an analysis of poems about grief by other contemporary poets or doing comparative analysis on multiple grief poems from different periods to show whether different temporal contexts influence the way people express their grief through poetry.

Keywords: death; grief account; grief dimensions; literature; Marie Howe; poem

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INTRODUCTION

Grief is a natural emotional response of loss. It can be caused by the loss of a loved object, job or opportunity or even the most common is the loss of loved one due to death. The loss of loved one due to death can sometimes be a terrible thing because when someone dies, not only they leave behind everything in this world, including happiness, pain, belongings, but also people who were still alive that must deal with the impacts of their death. One of the common impacts is grieving or bereavement, which can be defined as the state of having lost a relative or close friend because they have died (Bereavement).

Grief as the impacts of death is a common theme discussed in some literary

works. Dennis (2008) defines it as Grief Account which is the written narratives that focus primarily on the bereavement and grieving of survivors that may struggle to accept, understand, assimilate, overcome, manage, or cope with the loss of their loved one. Literary works often becomes a platform for the authors to convey their grieving experience in their works. One of the most well-known authors that discuss about grief is the American classical poet, Edgar Allan Poe. Poe's works revolve around his own experiences of death and grief of his loved ones. One of them is "Annabel Lee" which he wrote about his grief experience over the death of his wife, Virginia Poe. Through this poem, Poe expressed his longing for his wife

with him honouring their memories together. Meanwhile, one of the contemporary authors who discussed their own grief experience is Marie Howe.

Marie Howe is an American author who is known for her poetry collection entitled *What the Living Do* (1997) which talks about her late brother John Howe who died due to AIDS-related illness in 1989. Howe in her interview with Terry Gross in *Fresh Air*, one of public radio's most popular programs, says that the death of John was a terrible loss for her but through his death, she finds a way to live (Poet Marie Howe Reflects on the 'Living' After Loss, 2012). In her beautifully capturing reflections on her brother's death, *What the Living Do* was praised by *Publisher Weekly* to be one of the five best poetry collections of the year. It was also published in *The Penguin Anthology of 20th-Century American Poetry* to be one of the best poems of the 20th century (Marie Howe, 2008). Howe herself was selected by the poet Stanley Kunitz for the Lavan Younger Poets Award from the Academy of American Poets in 1988. In 2018, Howe was also selected to be the chancellor or the tutor for other poets in the Academy of American Poets (Fowler, 2025). From her poetry collection *What the Living Do* (1997), the researchers chose to analyze the poem entitled "What the Living Do" in this paper.

"What the Living Do" is a poem in a form of letter or is called epistolary poem. Epistolary poem refers to a verse that mimics the structure of a letter, traditionally addressing a person or group personally known to the poet (Greene, 2024). As it addressed to a specific person, the poem may contain the personal feelings and thoughts of the poet that they want to specifically convey to the addressee. Therefore, this epistolary poem makes the poem more intimate and personal. Marie Howe personally wrote her epistolary poem, "What the Living Do" to her late brother, John Howe, after his death due to AIDS. This poem shows how Marie Howe as the mourner facing her grief to the loss of her brother. Through the letter-poem that Howe wrote by herself, she expresses the various multifaceted ways of the grief that she experiences after the death of her brother. Howe shows how she longs for her brother, faces life problems, evaluates herself to think positive, has hopes, and experiences the transformative change in her life at the same time during her grieving process. The way Marie Howe expresses the various ways of experiencing her grief in "What the Living Do"

reflect Dennis' six dimensions of grief in the context of grief accounts.

Dimensions of grief can be defined as multiple ways of approaching the grief or bereavement that the mourners may experience after the loss of their loved one to death (Dennis, 2008). Dennis classifies grief into six dimensions: restorative, evaluative, interpretive, affective, affirmative, and transformative. In the restorative dimension, the mourners may describe their actions to make them feel better in their grief account. Meanwhile, the evaluative dimension shows how the mourners find comfort in a new perspective in their grim reality of grief. In the interpretive dimension, the mourners express the chaos of their grief, while the affective dimension is the way mourners express the bad experiences they feel in grieving. In the affirmative dimension, the mourners may recall the memories of the deceased when they were alive to affirm that they were real human beings who once lived. Lastly, the transformative dimension shows the experience of change of the mourners after their loved one death.

In this study, the objective is to find out how Marie Howe's poem "What the Living Do" conveys the grieving or bereavement process that the author experienced by identifying the six dimensions of grief within the poem.

Despite being a universal theme in literary works, study that focuses on the elements of grief in contemporary literature, specifically using poem as research object, is still limited. Previous studies conducted thus far are mostly focus on using psychological perspective to show how poetry can help patient through mourning process. For instance, a study by Harel (2023) focused on the process of listening for the signifiers of semiotic and symbolic language, using Kristeva and Lacan's theories. A similar approach was conducted by McLocklin et al. (2018) and Penwarden (2022). McLocklin et al. (2018) focus their study on how writing poetry aid the grieving process of which they argue that argue also that evoking the beloved through writing is part of healthy grieving. Meanwhile, Penwarden (2022) did a study that focused on narrating loss through a narrative therapy approach of retelling which involved writing found poems from the conversations of people who had lost a loved partner. Other studies by Astuti et al (2024) and Yustisiana (2022) both analysed contemporary poems using the concept of stages of grief by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross.

Astuti (2024) uses Maya Angelou's poem "When Great Tree Fall" and find the use of elements of nature in expressing grief. Meanwhile, Yustisiana (2022) uses several of Joy Harjo's selected poems to focus on the concept of ecological grief present in the poem. As such, based on the previous studies mentioned, this study contributes to the field by exploring how grief account is projected in contemporary poems by specifically using the concept of six dimensions of grief to understand Marie Howe's poem.

METHOD

This research is conducted using qualitative method, which refers to a research method that "involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences" (Bhandari, 2023). The method allows the researchers to examine and take note of small cues to decide how to make sense of the context as well as building larger knowledge claims about a particular research object (Tracy, 2019). The qualitative method is specifically conducted through content analysis, which generally focuses on identifying ideas in a text and analysing them in search of deeper meaning (Smith, 2017). The data source is a poem entitled "What the Living Do", and this study aims to explore the grief account by identifying Dennis' (2008) six dimensions of grief within the poem. In conducting the study, the researchers first analysed both literal and figurative meanings of dictions in the poem that are related to grief. Information regarding the poet's life and background were added to provide context as well as to support the poems' meanings more accurately. Secondly, the researchers discussed the poem further by categorizing the poem based on the concept of six dimensions of grief to identify the dimensions that were present in the poem. Lastly, the finding regarding the aspect of grief account in the poem is presented in the conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Grief over the death of loved one is a certain part of life that can be one of the most painful experiences someone have to endure (Robinson & Smith, 2025). The mourners may certainly experience grief in various ways or even in various durations to finally cope with the absence of loved one. From the poem "What the Living Do", Marie Howe also

reveals the multiple dimensions of grief that she experienced over the death of her brother, John Howe. Marie Howe as the mourner portrays her grief process until she finally discovers the meaning behind her grief. The whole poem is presented below:

"What the Living Do"

Johnny, the kitchen sink has been clogged for days, some utensil probably fell down there.

And the Drano won't work but smells dangerous, and the crusty dishes have piled up

waiting for the plumber I still haven't called. This is the everyday we spoke of.

It's winter again: the sky's a deep, headstrong blue, and the sunlight pours through

the open living-room windows because the heat's on too high in here and I can't turn it off. (5)

For weeks now, driving, or dropping a bag of groceries in the street, the bag breaking,

I've been thinking: This is what the living do. And yesterday, hurrying along those

wobbly bricks in the Cambridge sidewalk, spilling my coffee down my wrist and sleeve,

I thought it again, and again later, when buying a hairbrush: This is it.

Parking. Slamming the car door shut in the cold. What you called that yearning. (10)

What you finally gave up. We want the spring to come and the winter to pass. We want

whoever to call or not call, a letter, a kiss—we want more and more and then more of it.

But there are moments, walking, when I catch a glimpse of myself in the window glass,

say, the window of the corner video store, and I'm gripped by a cherishing so deep

for my own blowing hair, chapped face, and unbuttoned coat that I'm speechless: (15)

I am living. I remember you.

This paper focuses on identifying the multiple dimensions of grief that Marie Howe experiences in her grief account. This poem is simple yet personal and intimate just like how a sister talks to her brother about the struggle in life. Howe also includes figures of speech such as, symbolisms and various imageries that may implicitly reveal her various; multifaceted ways of grieving which

will be identified and categorized based on Dennis' six dimensions of grief.

According to Michael Robert Dennis (2008), there are six dimensions of grief that often appear in the contemporary published grief account, namely restorative, affective, interpretive, affirmative, evaluative and transformative. Below is a more detailed account of each of these dimensions, as they were drawn on to understand the grief account reflected in Marie Howe's poem.

The Restorative Dimension

The restorative dimension is a way of approaching grief which the mourners accomplish acts that address or ameliorate their grief (Dennis, 2008). This dimension shows how the mourners describe their actions to make them feel better in their grief and manage the difficulties of grief so that it is easier to live with.

The restorative action that Marie Howe do is writing this epistolary poem to her late brother, John Howe, after his death, as an act of grieving over him. The action is emphasized in the poem by Howe mentioning her late brother's name, "Johnny" (1). By mentioning the name, Howe puts herself to communicate with her late brother through the poem with an assumption that her brother will read it. This action is also emphasized from Howe's statement again 'This is the everyday we spoke of' (3). Howe uses the pronoun "we" that refers to herself and Johnny, as if she really talks with Johnny through the poem. This may show how she longs for a talk with Johnny who might often be her confidant to listen to all of her complains about struggle in everyday life.

Through this poem, Howe expresses her grief over her brother's passing by continuing to communicate with him through the epistolary poem she made. This action may show how she, as the mourner, may do action by writing the poem as a way to communicate with her late brother in order to keep her late brother figuratively alive as long as it will ameliorate her grief. This action is one way of her restorative attempts that she can express her longing for a talk during grief to her brother to make her feel better.

The Affective and Interpretive Dimensions

The interpretive dimension is the perception of chaos and confusion felt or faced by mourners during their grief experience (Dennis, 2008). This dimension shows how mourners describe the situation of chaos in their grief account. Meanwhile, the affective

dimension is the way mourners express the bad experiences they feel in grieving (ibid., 2008). Mourners can express in their grief account what they feel, focusing the pain and despair during their grief experience.

In this section, the researchers combine the two dimensions, which are the interpretive and affirmative dimensions, as both dimensions are featured in the same section of the poem. The first part of the poem that shows the two dimensions can be seen below:

"Johnny, the kitchen sink has been clogged for days, some utensil probably fell down there.

And the Drano won't work but smells dangerous, and the crusty dishes have piled up

waiting for the plumber I still haven't called."

In this part, Howe describes her house condition in her epistolary poem she wrote to her late brother. Howe, as discussed in the previous section, tries to communicate about her everyday life like she used to do with her late brother when they were still together, through this poem. In the literal sense, the house condition that she described shows a messy condition which can be seen from the clogged kitchen sink and the piled-up crusty dishes. This messiness may happen because Howe has been ignored it for days and did not find for the right solution, which is calling the plumber instead of just waiting.

The clogged kitchen sink and piled-up crusty dishes in the poem may suggest the chaos Howe faces during her time of grief. This chaotic condition reflects Dennis' interpretive dimension who may see grief as chaotic. Howe shows her interpretive dimension of grief by using the image of a dirty and messy house, so that the readers get a clear picture of what she wants to convey about grief, which may be something messy, stuck, piled up and dirty—something chaotic that is difficult to fix and manage.

With the same house condition, the poem also delivers the other dimension which is the affective dimension. The chaotic and messy condition in the house that is emphasized by the clogged kitchen sink and piled up crusty dishes may represent Howe's state of mind during the grief process. The clogged sink may represent something stuck and cannot progress or flow smoothly. This condition symbolizes Howe's state of mind during her grief that makes her stuck and hindered her from growing or progressing

even from grief over Johnny's death. The piled-up crusty dishes may also show how her grief is accumulated into something more complex because she has been grieving for a long time. Therefore, the grief within her for her brother may piled up like the dishes in her house. Howe express how she feels stuck in her grief and difficult to move on as the grief always lingers even accumulate in her mind.

Another part in the poem also discusses the chaotic and messy condition that represents Dennis' Interpretive and Affective dimension. The part of the poem can be seen below:

"For weeks now, driving, or dropping a bag of groceries in the street, the bag breaking,
I've been thinking: This is what the living do. And yesterday, hurrying along those
wobbly bricks in the Cambridge sidewalk, spilling my coffee down my wrist and sleeve,"

In this part, Howe describes another chaotic and messy situation that she faces during her grief. Such condition is shown when Howe states that her groceries bag is breaking on the street and her coffee is spilling down her wrist and sleeve. In the literal sense, this situation shows a chaos and mess. It can be seen from the broken groceries bag that may spill its content and cause many items scattered messily on the street. Moreover, her coffee spilling down her wrist and sleeve also shows messiness condition that she faces in her life. The coffee that spills may leave a coffee stain in her wrist and sleeve. This may cause another messiness in her life that she experiences.

The broken groceries bag and spilling coffee may represent the perspective of chaos during grief experience. Howe shows her perspective on the chaotic of grief with describing the messiness of the scattered items caused by the broken groceries bag. With this condition, Howe seems to describe her grief as chaotic as the scattered items drops from the groceries bag. Even more, Howe also describe the chaotic of grief as something messier, which is the coffee that spilled in her wrist and sleeve. As mentioned earlier, the coffee leaves stain that makes the sleeve dirty. This also emphasizes that Howe, in her poem, expresses her perception of the chaotic grief through the situation that happened in her daily life.

With the same situation, Howe also expresses her affective dimension which is how the grief affects her feeling. The broken groceries bag may represent something vulnerable and fragile that easy to break apart. In the poem, Howe may use these broken groceries bag to symbolize her broken heart after her brother's passing. As Howe also said in her interview that her brother's death was a terrible loss for her. This may prove that Howe becomes broken in her grief. The grief over her brother's death leaves her to become vulnerable just like the groceries bag that breaks on the street. The items scattered may also represent something messy inside her feeling. Howe expresses how her grief makes her become overly emotional person who easily vents or "spills" her emotions excessively. Besides that, spilling coffee down her wrist and sleeve also represent how Howe expresses her affective dimension of grief in her poem. The coffee stains in her wrist and sleeve symbolizes the attached grief that is not easy to wash away from her life just like the stubborn coffee stains.

The Affirmative Dimension

The affirmative dimension is a way of approaching grief in which mourners recall their memories of details about the character and experiences of the deceased to affirm that they were real human beings who once lived (Dennis, 2008). This dimension shows how the mourners describe the deceased's physical appearance, habits or some shared experiences that the mourners and the deceased once did. In this poem, Howe, as the mourner, recalls her memories of her late brother about what they used to do together when her brother was still alive. The part of the poem can be seen below:

Johnny, the kitchen sink has been clogged for days, some utensil probably fell down there.

And the Drano won't work but smells dangerous, and the crusty dishes have piled up

waiting for the plumber I still haven't called. This is the everyday we spoke of.

In this part, Howe tells Johnny, her late brother, about her messy house. The messiness is shown from the clogged kitchen sink and the piled-up crusty dishes. After telling him the condition of the house, Howe states that "This is the everyday we spoke of." (3) to show the habit they once shared

together in their everyday live, which is speaking about the messiness in their life.

This part of the poem shows the affirmative dimension in Howe's grief account which affirms the existence of her late brother. This dimension is emphasized by Howe showing the habit they used to do, which speaking about their lives. The action of speaking affirms that Johnny or the deceased has once lived. The action "speak" is also written in the past tense which is "spoke", showing that such habit is no longer happen after Johnny died. Besides showing the habits, Howe also shows a close relationship between them. By using the word "everyday" which shows that they talked to each other frequently. This intimate habit may be one of the precious memories they shared together that Howe, as the mourner, choose to affirm in her grief account.

Another part in the poem also proves the existence of Howe's late brother that represents the affirmative dimension. The part of the poem can be seen below:

Parking. Slamming the car door shut in the cold. What you called that yearning. (10)

What you finally gave up. We want the spring to come and the winter to pass. We want

whoever to call or not call, a letter, a kiss—we want more and more and then more of it.

In this part, Howe shows her brother's yearning and hoping something positive when he was alive. Howe describes that her brother yearned for the daily activity, which can be seen from Howe's statement, "parking and slamming the car door. What you called that yearning." (10). These two activities represent the daily life that the living person faces in their everyday life and what the brother yearns for. Howe also mentions that those two daily activities she experiences now, are something that Johnny finally gave up. It is shown in Howe's statement, "What you finally gave up" (11). The phrasal verb "Give up" shows that Johnny, who has died, is unable to do what the living do, which is to face all daily life routines and struggle. The way Howe talking about what her brother's yearning of experiencing daily life activity, it shows the affirmative dimension of grief in this poem. Howe may recall the memories of her brother and her, even the details about what the brother yearned when he was alive.

Besides yearning, Howe also describes that her brother also once hoped for something to happen in his life. The action of

hoping something good is emphasized from Howe statement, "We want the spring to come and the winter to pass" (11). Howe describes that her brother hoped for the changing season from the winter to the spring. Winter is the coldest season of the year. It often called dormancy season, or off-season because many plants die or do not bear fruit until later in the spring, many animals hibernate, and many insects die (Winter, 2025). Winter here may represent how someone's life is also in a state of dormancy in which it is not processing, achieving, or producing good works or things in life. These conditions make her brother hopes for a better season, which is spring. As spring is the season when plants begin to grow, in many cultures it also represents hope and optimism for better conditions after experiencing difficult situations, such as all-natural things that were dead or inactive during winter starting to come alive in spring (Pertont, 2025). The way Howe's brother hopes for the changing season here may represent how the brother wants to change his difficult condition and hope for something positive in his life.

Howe also describes another positive aspect that her brother once hoped in his life, which is the hope for connection with other people. It is emphasized from Howe's statement, "We want whoever to call or not call, a letter, a kiss—we want more and more and then more of it" (12). Howe describes that her brother once hoped for connection through the call, the letter, and the kiss. The call and the letter are the two ways of communication that the brother may hope for in his life. Moreover, the kiss may represent a sign of love in a relationship, which shows that the brother hopes for a connection with other people to give and receive love to each other.

Those hopes show the affirmation of her brother's presence that Howe described in her grief account. Howe may recall how she remembered the detail of what her brother always yearns and hopes for when he was alive. Besides affirming her late brother's presence, Howe also refers to herself in the act of hoping something. This may show that by recalling the detail memories of her brother, Howe also hopes for something good to happen in her life that she described it in her grief account as an act of affirmation.

The Evaluative Dimension

The evaluative dimension is an activity of the mourners or distressed individuals finding

comfort in a new perspective and representation of their grim reality of grief (Dennis, 2008). This dimension shows how the mourner may evaluate their negative perspective of grief into something positive or valuable as motivation for living life, and even as enriching life. In this poem, Howe, as the mourner, chooses to evaluate her grief by reflecting the two sides of living that she should experience. The part of the poem that shows the reflection can be seen below:

I've been thinking: This is what the living do. And yesterday, hurrying along those

wobbly bricks in the Cambridge sidewalk, spilling my coffee down my wrist and sleeve,

I thought it again, and again later, when buying a hairbrush: This is it.

In this part of the poem, Howe emphasized her evaluative dimension with thinking deeply or reflecting on the messiness and chaos condition in her life during grief process. From Howe's statement "I've been thinking" (7) and "I thought it again, and again later," (9), Howe evaluates the condition she had in her grief process over her brother, Johnny, by thinking about it carefully. This evaluation process may show how Howe, as the mourner, tries to understand better on the constant messiness and chaos of her grief.

The result of her evaluation is the understanding that all the messiness in her grief is the part of her life as the living. From Howe's statement, "This is what the living do" (7), that also becomes the title of this poem, Howe shows her new perspective of the grief that she experiences. The pronoun "this" may refer to all of her messy house conditions that have been mentioned before in the previous section, which are the clogged sink, the pile-up crusty dishes, the broken grocery bag and the coffee stain in her sleeve and wrist. This understanding indicates that Howe acknowledges herself as the mourner who still have to live and encounter some challenges and imperfections in her life. This process of understanding may show Dennis' evaluative dimension, in which Howe can find positive or valuable perspective on her messy grief as motivation for living life. This emphasizes the phrase "What the Living Do" in Howe's grief account which shows the changing perspectives to the new—more positive views on her life.

The Transformative Dimension

The transformative dimension is the experience of change of the mourner after their loved one death. The transformative change that the mourners experience may be in the negative or positive way, generally includes their characteristics, social roles and relationships (Dennis, 2008). This dimension uncovers the way the mourners live after the deceased absence in their lives with showing the change of the way they think and see the world. Marie Howe also experiences the transformative change in her life after her brother's passing. Howe begins to appreciate her life more. In the poem, Howe reveals her new identity as the mourner who is messy, surrounded by problems, but can hope and preserve her memories of her brother in her mind. The part of the poem that shows Howe's transformative change can be seen below:

But there are moments, walking, when I catch a glimpse of myself in the window glass,

say, the window of the corner video store, and I'm gripped by a cherishing so deep

for my own blowing hair, chapped face, and unbuttoned coat that I'm speechless: (15)

I am living. I remember you.

In this part, Howe shows her transformative change after she catches a glimpse in the corner video store window that reveals her current appearance. Howe's appearance is messy with her blowing hair, chapped face and unbuttoned coat. This messiness may re-emphasize the chaos and messiness of grief in her life. However, Howe eventually chooses to appreciate this mess; in contrast to the earlier part of the poem which only states or describes the messy condition of her home.

The feeling of cherish that she gives to her messy looks at the end of the poem may represent Dennis's transformative dimension, which shows the experience of change in seeing the messiness of the grief within herself. This dimension is emphasized by how Marie Howe can finally be grateful for life despite the grief of losing her brother. The feeling of cherish that Howe feels shows that she has accepted the messiness of grief that will probably always be there as long as she lives. Through her statement "I'm gripped by a cherishing so deep for my own blowing hair, chapped face, and unbuttoned coat that I'm speechless" (14-15) Howe shows that she

feels gratitude for her life not only when faced with something beautiful, but also from something messy. This shows that Howe, chooses to make peace and accept her life that will always be side by side with grief. From Howe's statement "I am living. I remember you." (16), Howe shows that the best thing she can do as the mourner is to live, so she can always remember her late brother.

This part of the poem shows the way Howe altered her meaning of life to remember her late brother. Howe does not say that the grief is over with this kind of acceptance; in contrast, she lets herself to live with it in order to preserve grief of her late brother by appreciating the life that she still has.

From the analysis, the researchers found that Marie Howe applies these six dimensions in her grief account poem. This may indicate that Dennis' six dimensions of grief are commonly felt by mourners as a universal way of coping with the death of their loved ones. By analyzing this poem, the researchers can empathize with the ways of grieving described by Marie Howe in her poem, as the researchers also experienced it themselves when the researchers lost their closest friend. Analyzing grief account using Dennis's six dimensions of grief gave them a deeper understanding that everyone who grieves has their own way of grieving, which can also occur simultaneously. This understanding about grief dimension brings awareness that while grief is a universal experience at the same time there is no definite way to grieve for the death of a loved one.

CONCLUSION

The poem analysis shows that Howe's poem contains Dennis' six dimensions of grief: restorative, affective, interpretative, affirmative, evaluative, and transformative. Marie Howe, as the author as well as the mourner of this grief account, has impactfully delivered her way of grieving over her brother's death through this poem. It can be seen from her choice of words that helps in revealing her condition after her loss. Moreover, Howe, in most of her poems, often uses the everyday condition that everyone faces in their daily life so that the readers can understand what she wants to convey easily and vividly. Furthermore, Howe includes figures of speech, symbolisms, and imageries in the poem to emphasize on the complexity of grieving process that she experienced to

the readers. Those poetic devices also help her to personally express her feelings toward the death of her loved one in a relatable way starting from the chaotic suffering to transformative changes that may be felt by the mourners throughout the process. The researchers believe the finding of this study stands out from the current research that mostly focus on the psychological perspective when analysing the grief account poems. By analysing the six dimensions of grief via intrinsic approach, it helps to provide a more in-depth exploration on how grief is being expressed through poetry that can be easily overlooked if one only sees it as a form of therapy rather than a rich expressive art form inspired by tough moments in life. In the end, by revealing the dimensions of grief from this poem, it emphasizes the fact that there is no one definite and correct way to grieve. On the contrary, there are many ways and can be overlapping between one and another, which shows how complex and multi-faceted the process of grieving really is for an individual while at the same time also show how universal it is. For future research, it is possible to develop an analysis of poems about grief by other contemporary poets or doing comparative analysis on multiple grief poems from different periods to show whether different temporal contexts influence the way people express their grief through poetry.

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