

Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death (712)

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 –

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A narrow Fellow in the Grass (986)

A narrow Fellow in the Grass  
Occasionally rides --  
You may have met Him -- did you not  
His notice sudden is --

The Grass divides as with a Comb --  
A spotted shaft is seen --  
And then it closes at your feet

And opens further on --

He likes a Boggy Acre  
 A Floor too cool for Corn --  
 Yet when a Boy, and Barefoot --  
 I more than once at Noon  
 Have passed, I thought, a Whip lash  
 Unbraiding in the Sun  
 When stooping to secure it  
 It wrinkled, and was gone --

Several of Nature's People  
 I know, and they know me --  
 I feel for them a transport  
 Of cordiality --

But never met this Fellow  
 Attended, or alone  
 Without a tighter breathing  
 And Zero at the Bone --

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I cannot live with You (640)  
 by Emily Dickinson

I cannot live with You --  
 It would be Life --  
 And Life is over there --  
 Behind the Shelf

The Sexton keeps the Key to --  
 Putting up  
 Our Life -- His Porcelain --  
 Like a Cup --

Discarded of the Housewife --  
 Quaint -- or Broke --  
 A newer Sevres pleases --  
 Old Ones crack --

I could not die -- with You --  
 For One must wait  
 To shut the Other's Gaze down --  
 You -- could not --

And I -- could I stand by  
 And see You -- freeze --

Without my Right of Frost –  
Death's privilege?

Nor could I rise – with You –  
Because Your Face  
Would put out Jesus' –  
That New Grace

Glow plain – and foreign  
On my homesick Eye –  
Except that You than He  
Shone closer by –

They'd judge Us – How –  
For You – served Heaven – You know,  
Or sought to –  
I could not –

Because You saturated Sight –  
And I had no more Eyes  
For sordid excellence  
As Paradise

And were You lost, I would be –  
Though My Name  
Rang loudest  
On the Heavenly fame –

And were You – saved –  
And I – condemned to be  
Where You were not –  
That self – were Hell to Me –

So We must meet apart –  
You there – I – here –  
With just the Door ajar  
That Oceans are – and Prayer –  
And that White Sustenance –  
Despair –

Apparently with no surprise (76)

Apparently with no surprise  
To any happy Flower  
The Frost beheads it at its play –

In accidental power –  
 The blonde Assassin passes on –  
 The Sun proceeds unmoved  
 To measure off another Day  
 For an Approving God.

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Dare you see a Soul at the White Heat? (33)

Dare you see a Soul at the White Heat?  
 Then crouch within the door --  
 Red -- is the Fire's common tint --  
 But when the vivid Ore  
 Has vanquished Flame's conditions,  
 It quivers from the Forge  
 Without a color, but the light  
 Of unanointed Blaze.  
 Least Village has its Blacksmith  
 Whose Anvil's even ring  
 Stands symbol for the finer Forge  
 That soundless tugs -- within --  
 Refining these impatient Ores  
 With Hammer, and with Blaze  
 Until the Designated Light  
 Repudiate the Forge --

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Wild nights! Wild nights! (25)

Wild nights! Wild nights!  
 Were I with thee,  
 Wild nights should be  
 Our luxury!

Futile the winds  
 To a heart in port,—  
 Done with the compass,  
 Done with the chart.

Rowing in Eden!  
 Ah! the sea!  
 Might I but moor  
 To-night in thee!