

Because I could not stop for Death

By Emily Dickinson

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 –

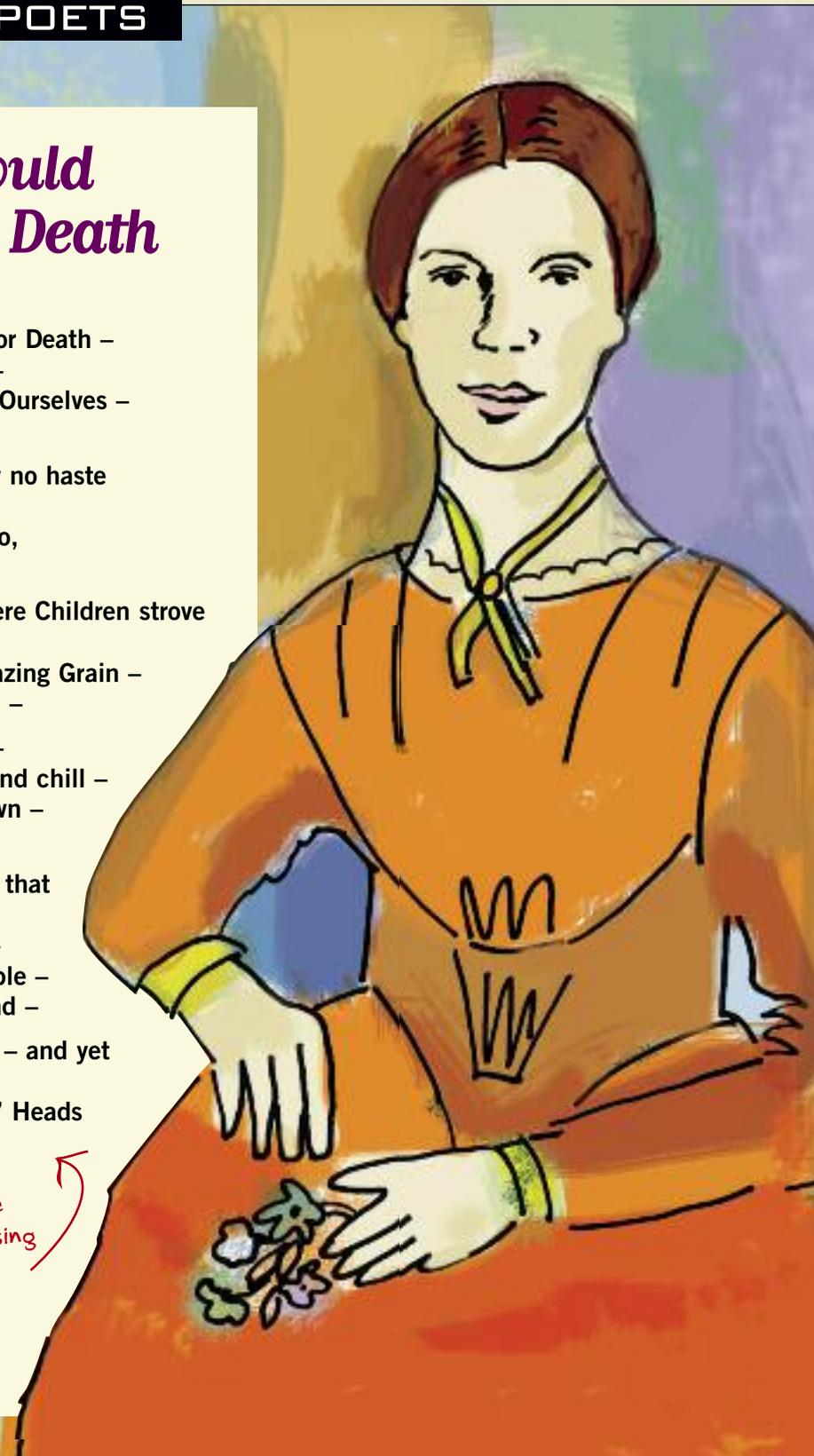
Or rather – He passed Us –
The Dews drew quivering and chill –
For only Gossamer, my Gown –
My Tippet – only Tulle –

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 –

Death doesn't have to be frightening. Dickinson, using all her sheltered skills, makes death seem like a pleasant ride that lasts throughout all eternity.



Emily Dickinson: Lonesome Beauty

By Bryon Cahill, senior editor



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To all the tragic poets who ever were, Emily Dickinson is your queen.

The **recluse** spent most of her adult life in her bedroom in her father's house in Amherst, N.Y. Shrouded in loneliness, she often wrote of happiness just out of reach.

Dickinson was inspired all the time. She wrote her poems on little scraps of paper, napkins, and cloth. She never stopped feeling, so she never stopped writing.

She was an admirer of John Keats and other Romantic poets, though she didn't wish to copy their style. She felt that expressing one's emotions was more vital to poetry than the flowery feel of Romanticism.

Dickinson longed for the things she knew she would never have. And when she wasn't writing about death, she often **expounded** on the gloriousness of nature. Writing was Dickinson's way to express her immense feelings of solitude. The magnitude of that kind of content was something the literary world had never seen before.

Dickinson once wrote, "To live is so startling it leaves little time for anything else." If that were true, the world would have been robbed of her poetry. Of the nearly

1,800 poems she composed, only 11 were published in her lifetime.

Here is my tribute to Emily Dickinson's unrealized greatness in her time and to her passionate, lonesome style.

Mistress of Solitude

At last, the beetle crawled away,
I wondered when he would.
For insects seldom linger in dirt,
When they could be scrounging for food.

And then, the pigeon too took flight,
Battering black wings against the sky.
I watched in unmatched wonder
As the wind made it difficult to fly.

Yet still, a whistle in my own bellows called
Advising me to follow.
But standing still
In awe of other exits was all my heart
would allow.

At last, a fragile voice in this room's
corner shadow
Urged me to move on.
"Escape! Fly! Create and love!" she begged,
"As only we know how."

* vocab

RECLUSE: a person who leads a secluded or solitary life

EXPOUNDED: explained in detail