**#754 – Emily Dickinson**

My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun –   
In Corners – till a Day  
The Owner passed – identified –   
And carried Me away –

And now We roam in Sovereign Woods –  
And now We hunt the Doe –   
And every time I speak for Him –  
The Mountains straight reply –

And do I smile, such cordial light  
Upon the Valley glow –  
It is as a Vesuvian face  
Had let its pleasure through –

And when at Night – Our good Day done –  
I guard My Master's Head –  
'Tis better than the Eider-Duck's  
Deep Pillow – to have shared –

To foe of His – I'm deadly foe –  
None stir the second time –  
On whom I lay a Yellow Eye –  
Or an emphatic Thumb –

Though I than He – may longer live –  
He longer must – than I –  
For I have but the power to kill,  
Without – the power to die –

**#712 – 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 –

**#341 – Emily Dickinson**

After great pain, a formal feeling comes –  
The Nerves sit ceremonious, like Tombs –  
The stiff Heart questions, was it He, that bore,  
And Yesterday, or Centuries before?  
  
The Feet, mechanical, go round –  
Of Ground, or Air, or Ought –  
A Wooden way  
Regardless grown,  
A Quartz contentment, like a stone –  
  
This is the Hour of Lead –  
Remembered, if outlived,  
As Freezing persons recollect the Snow –  
First – Chill – then Stupor – then the letting go –

**#214 – Emily Dickinson**

I like a look of Agony,  
Because I know it's true —  
Men do not sham Convulsion,  
Nor simulate, a Throe —  
  
The Eyes glaze once — and that is Death —  
Impossible to feign  
The Beads upon the Forehead  
By homely Anguish strung.

**#314 – Emily Dickinson**

Hope is the thing with feathers –

That perches in the soul –

And sings the tune without the words –

And never stops – at all –

And sweetest – in the Gale – is heard –

And sore must be the storm –

That could abash the little Bird

That kept so many warm –

I’ve heard it in the chillest land –

And on the strangest Sea –

Yet – never – in Extremity,

It asked a crumb – of me.

**“Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” – Walt Whitman**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1  FLOOD-TIDE below me! I watch you face to face; |  |
| Clouds of the west! sun there half an hour high! I see you also face to face. |  |
|  |  |
| Crowds of men and women attired in the usual costumes! how curious you are to me! |  |
| On the ferry-boats, the hundreds and hundreds that cross, returning home, are more curious to me than you suppose; |  |
| And you that shall cross from shore to shore years hence, are more to me, and more in my meditations, than you might suppose. | *5* |
|  |  |
| 2  The impalpable sustenance of me from all things, at all hours of the day; |  |
| The simple, compact, well-join’d scheme—myself disintegrated, every one disintegrated, yet part of the scheme: |  |
| The similitudes of the past, and those of the future; |  |
| The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and hearings—on the walk in the street, and the passage over the river; |  |
| The current rushing so swiftly, and swimming with me far away; | *10* |
| The others that are to follow me, the ties between me and them; |  |
| The certainty of others—the life, love, sight, hearing of others. |  |
|  |  |
| Others will enter the gates of the ferry, and cross from shore to shore; |  |
| Others will watch the run of the flood-tide; |  |
| Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and west, and the heights of Brooklyn to the south and east; | *15* |
| Others will see the islands large and small; |  |
| Fifty years hence, others will see them as they cross, the sun half an hour high; |  |
| A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years hence, others will see them, |  |
| Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring in of the flood-tide, the falling back to the sea of the ebb-tide. |  |
|  |  |
| 3  It avails not, neither time or place—distance avails not; | *20* |
| I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence; |  |
| I project myself—also I return—I am with you, and know how it is. |  |
|  |  |
| Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt; |  |
| Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a crowd; |  |
| Just as you are refresh’d by the gladness of the river and the bright flow, I was refresh’d; | *25* |
| Just as you stand and lean on the rail, yet hurry with the swift current, I stood, yet was hurried; |  |
| Just as you look on the numberless masts of ships, and the thick-stem’d pipes of steamboats, I look’d. |  |
|  |  |
| I too many and many a time cross’d the river, the sun half an hour high; |  |
| I watched the Twelfth-month sea-gulls—I saw them high in the air, floating with motionless wings, oscillating their bodies, |  |
| I saw how the glistening yellow lit up parts of their bodies, and left the rest in strong shadow, | *30* |
| I saw the slow-wheeling circles, and the gradual edging toward the south. |  |
|  |  |
| I too saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water, |  |
| Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track of beams, |  |
| Look’d at the fine centrifugal spokes of light around the shape of my head in the sun-lit water, |  |
| Look’d on the haze on the hills southward and southwestward, | *35* |
| Look’d on the vapor as it flew in fleeces tinged with violet, |  |
| Look’d toward the lower bay to notice the arriving ships, |  |
| Saw their approach, saw aboard those that were near me, |  |
| Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops—saw the ships at anchor, |  |
| The sailors at work in the rigging, or out astride the spars, | *40* |
| The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls, the slender serpentine pennants, |  |
| The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots in their pilot-houses, |  |
| The white wake left by the passage, the quick tremulous whirl of the wheels, |  |
| The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sun-set, |  |
| The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled cups, the frolicsome crests and glistening, | *45* |
| The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the gray walls of the granite store-houses by the docks, |  |
| On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug closely flank’d on each side by the barges—the hay-boat, the belated lighter, |  |
| On the neighboring shore, the fires from the foundry chimneys burning high and glaringly into the night, |  |
| Casting their flicker of black, contrasted with wild red and yellow light, over the tops of houses, and down into the clefts of streets. |  |
|  |  |
| 4  These, and all else, were to me the same as they are to you; | *50* |
| I project myself a moment to tell you—also I return. |  |
|  |  |
| I loved well those cities; |  |
| I loved well the stately and rapid river; |  |
| The men and women I saw were all near to me; |  |
| Others the same—others who look back on me, because I look’d forward to them; | *55* |
| (The time will come, though I stop here to-day and to-night.) |  |
|  |  |
| 5  What is it, then, between us? |  |
| What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between us? |  |
|  |  |
| Whatever it is, it avails not—distance avails not, and place avails not. |  |
|  |  |
| 6  I too lived—Brooklyn, of ample hills, was mine; | *60* |
| I too walk’d the streets of Manhattan Island, and bathed in the waters around it; |  |
| I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me, |  |
| In the day, among crowds of people, sometimes they came upon me, |  |
| In my walks home late at night, or as I lay in my bed, they came upon me. |  |
|  |  |
| I too had been struck from the float forever held in solution; | *65* |
| I too had receiv’d identity by my Body; |  |
| That I was, I knew was of my body—and what I should be, I knew I should be of my body. |  |
|  |  |
| 7  It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall, |  |
| The dark threw patches down upon me also; |  |
| The best I had done seem’d to me blank and suspicious; | *70* |
| My great thoughts, as I supposed them, were they not in reality meagre? would not people laugh at me? |  |
|  |  |
| It is not you alone who know what it is to be evil; |  |
| I am he who knew what it was to be evil; |  |
| I too knitted the old knot of contrariety, |  |
| Blabb’d, blush’d, resented, lied, stole, grudg’d, | *75* |
| Had guile, anger, lust, hot wishes I dared not speak, |  |
| Was wayward, vain, greedy, shallow, sly, cowardly, malignant; |  |
| The wolf, the snake, the hog, not wanting in me, |  |
| The cheating look, the frivolous word, the adulterous wish, not wanting, |  |
| Refusals, hates, postponements, meanness, laziness, none of these wanting. | *80* |
|  |  |
| 8  But I was Manhattanese, friendly and proud! |  |
| I was call’d by my nighest name by clear loud voices of young men as they saw me approaching or passing, |  |
| Felt their arms on my neck as I stood, or the negligent leaning of their flesh against me as I sat, |  |
| Saw many I loved in the street, or ferry-boat, or public assembly, yet never told them a word, |  |
| Lived the same life with the rest, the same old laughing, gnawing, sleeping, | *85* |
| Play’d the part that still looks back on the actor or actress, |  |
| The same old role, the role that is what we make it, as great as we like, |  |
| Or as small as we like, or both great and small. |  |
|  |  |
| 9  Closer yet I approach you; |  |
| What thought you have of me, I had as much of you—I laid in my stores in advance; | *90* |
| I consider’d long and seriously of you before you were born. |  |
|  |  |
| Who was to know what should come home to me? |  |
| Who knows but I am enjoying this? |  |
| Who knows but I am as good as looking at you now, for all you cannot see me? |  |
|  |  |
| It is not you alone, nor I alone; | *95* |
| Not a few races, nor a few generations, nor a few centuries; |  |
| It is that each came, or comes, or shall come, from its due emission, |  |
| From the general centre of all, and forming a part of all: |  |
| Everything indicates—the smallest does, and the largest does; |  |
| A necessary film envelopes all, and envelopes the Soul for a proper time. | *100* |
|  |  |
| 10  Now I am curious what sight can ever be more stately and admirable to me than my mast-hemm’d Manhattan, |  |
| My river and sun-set, and my scallop-edg’d waves of flood-tide, |  |
| The sea-gulls oscillating their bodies, the hay-boat in the twilight, and the belated lighter; |  |
| Curious what Gods can exceed these that clasp me by the hand, and with voices I love call me promptly and loudly by my nighest name as I approach; |  |
| Curious what is more subtle than this which ties me to the woman or man that looks in my face, | *105* |
| Which fuses me into you now, and pours my meaning into you. |  |
|  |  |
| We understand, then, do we not? |  |
| What I promis’d without mentioning it, have you not accepted? |  |
| What the study could not teach—what the preaching could not accomplish, is accomplish’d, is it not? |  |
| What the push of reading could not start, is started by me personally, is it not? | *110* |
|  |  |
| 11  Flow on, river! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with the ebb-tide! |  |
| Frolic on, crested and scallop-edg’d waves! |  |
| Gorgeous clouds of the sun-set! drench with your splendor me, or the men and women generations after me; |  |
| Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of passengers! |  |
| Stand up, tall masts of Mannahatta!—stand up, beautiful hills of Brooklyn! | *115* |
| Throb, baffled and curious brain! throw out questions and answers! |  |
| Suspend here and everywhere, eternal float of solution! |  |
| Gaze, loving and thirsting eyes, in the house, or street, or public assembly! |  |
| Sound out, voices of young men! loudly and musically call me by my nighest name! |  |
| Live, old life! play the part that looks back on the actor or actress! | *120* |
| Play the old role, the role that is great or small, according as one makes it! |  |
|  |  |
| Consider, you who peruse me, whether I may not in unknown ways be looking upon you; |  |
| Be firm, rail over the river, to support those who lean idly, yet haste with the hasting current; |  |
| Fly on, sea-birds! fly sideways, or wheel in large circles high in the air; |  |
| Receive the summer sky, you water! and faithfully hold it, till all downcast eyes have time to take it from you; | *125* |
| Diverge, fine spokes of light, from the shape of my head, or any one’s head, in the sun-lit water; |  |
| Come on, ships from the lower bay! pass up or down, white-sail’d schooners, sloops, lighters! |  |
| Flaunt away, flags of all nations! be duly lower’d at sunset; |  |
| Burn high your fires, foundry chimneys! cast black shadows at nightfall! cast red and yellow light over the tops of the houses; |  |
| Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are; | *130* |
| You necessary film, continue to envelop the soul; |  |
| About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung our divinest aromas; |  |
| Thrive, cities! bring your freight, bring your shows, ample and sufficient rivers; |  |
| Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more spiritual; |  |
| Keep your places, objects than which none else is more lasting. | *135* |
|  |  |
| 12  We descend upon you and all things—we arrest you all; |  |
| We realize the soul only by you, you faithful solids and fluids; |  |
| Through you color, form, location, sublimity, ideality; |  |
| Through you every proof, comparison, and all the suggestions and determinations of ourselves. |  |
|  |  |
| You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful ministers! you novices! | *140* |
| We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate henceforward; |  |
| Not you any more shall be able to foil us, or withhold yourselves from us; |  |
| We use you, and do not cast you aside—we plant you permanently within us; |  |
| We fathom you not—we love you—there is perfection in you also; |  |
| You furnish your parts toward eternity; | *145* |
| Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the soul. |  |