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I Heard a Fly Buzz When I Died

I heard a fly buzz-when I died
The stillness in the room
Was like the stillness in the air
Between the heaves of Strom
Th
The Eyes around-had wrung them dry
And Breaths were gathering firm
For that last Onset- when the King Be
Witnessed-in the Room
I willed my Keepsakes-signed away
What portion of me be
Assignable-and then it was
There interposed a fly
With Blue-Uncertain-stumbling-Buzz
Between the light and me
And then the windows failed-and then
I could not see to see
It Was Not Death, For I stood Up

It was not death, for I stood up

And all the death, lie down

It was not Night, for all the Bells

Put out their Tongues, for Noon

It was not frost, for on my Flesh

I felt Siroccos-crawl

No fire-for just my Marbel feet

Could keep a Chancel, cool

And yet, it tasted, like the all,

The Figures I have seen

Set orderly, for Burial

Reminded me, of mine

Ass if my life were shaven

And fitted to frame

And could not breathe without a key
And ‘twas like Midnight, some

When everything that ticked-has stopped
And space stares-all around-
Or Grisly frosts first Autumn morns
Repeal the beating ground

But most, like Chaos-Stopless-cool
Without a Chance, or spar
Or even a Report of Land
To Justify-Despair.
BIOGRAPHY

Emily Dickinson was born on December 10, 1830 in Amherst Massachusetts. Her family had deep roots in New England. Her paternal grandfather, Samuel Dickinson was well known as the founder Amherst College. Her father worked at Amherst and served as a state legislator. He married Emily Norcross in 1828 and the couple had three children: William Austin, Emily and Lavinia Norcroos.

Emily began writing as a teenager. Her early influences include Leonard Humphrey, principal of Amherts Academy and a family friend named Benjamin Frankling Newton, who sent Emily a book of poetry by Ralph Waldo Emerson. In 1855, Emily ventured outside of Amherts, as far as Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There, she befriended a minister named Charles Wadsworth, who would also become a cherished correspondent.

Emily seclusion during her later years has been the object of mush speculation. Scholars have thought that she suffered from conditions such as Agoraphobia Depression, or may have been sequestered due to her responsibilities as guardian of her sick mother. Emily was also treated for a painful ailment of her eyes. After the maid-1860 she rarely left the confines of the Homestead. It was also around this time, from the late 1850 to mid 60, that Emily was most productive as a poet, creating small bundles of verse
known as fascicles without any awarness on the part of her family members. In her spare time, Emily studied botany and produced a vast herbarium. She also maintained correspondence with a variety of contacts. One of her friendship, with Judge Otis PhilipdLord, seems to Lord’s death in 1884. Emily died of kidney disease in Amherts Massachusetts, on may 15, 1886 at the age of 55. She was laid to rest in her family plot at west cemetery. The Homestead, where Emily was born, is now a museum.

Little of Emily work was published at the time of her death, and the few works that were published were edited and altered to adhere to conventional standards of the time. Unfortunately, much of the power Emily unusual use of syntax and form was lost in the alteration. After emily death, Lavinia discovered hundreds of poems that Emily had crafted over the published in 1890. A full compilation, *The poems of Emily Dickinson*, wasn’t published until 1995, though previous iterations had been released.

Emily stature as a writer soared from the first publication of her poems in their intended form. She is known for her poignant and compressed verse, which profoundly influenced the direction of 20th-century poetry. The strength of her literary voice, as well as her reclusive and eccentric life, contributes to the sense of Emily as an indelible American character who continues to be discussed today.