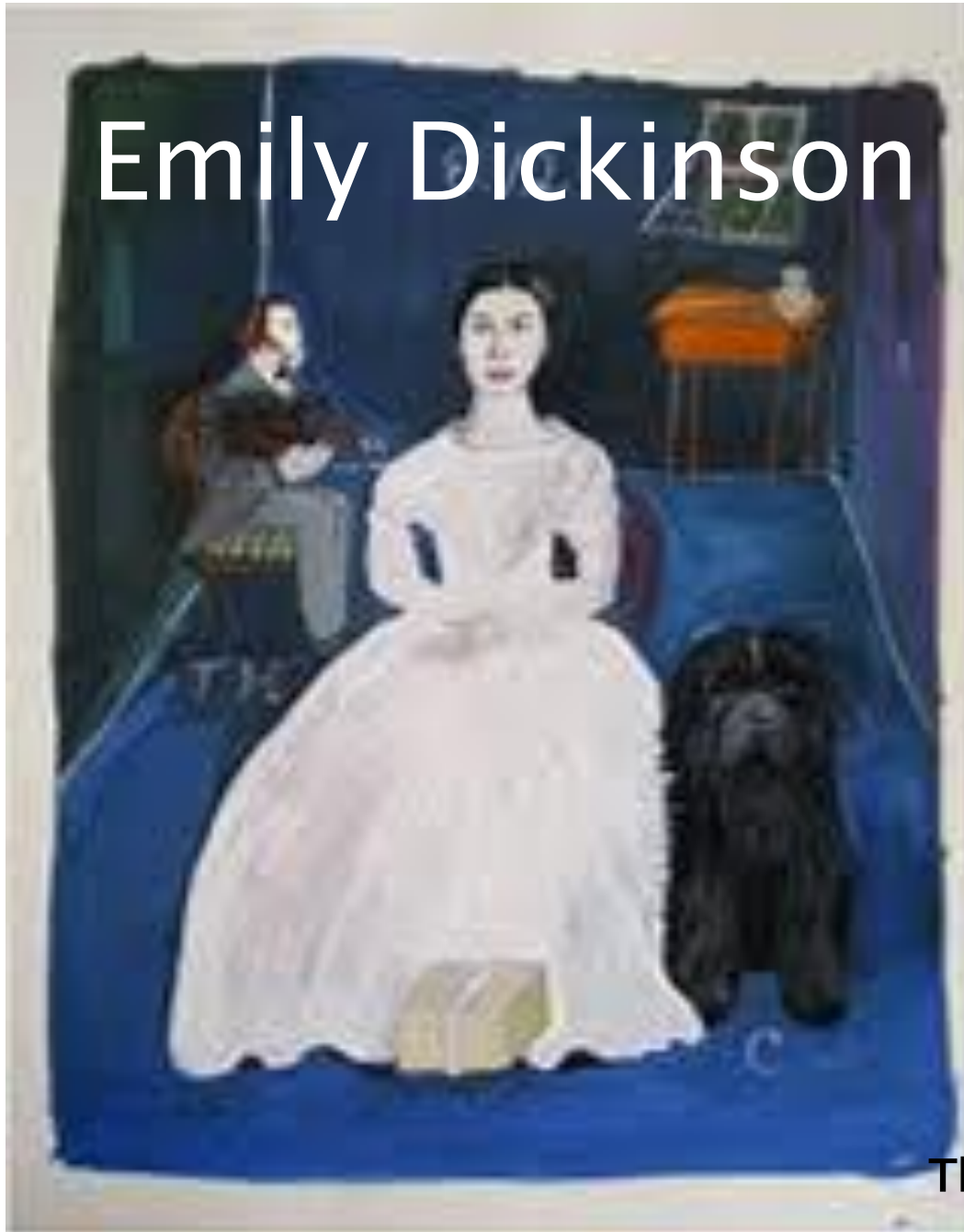
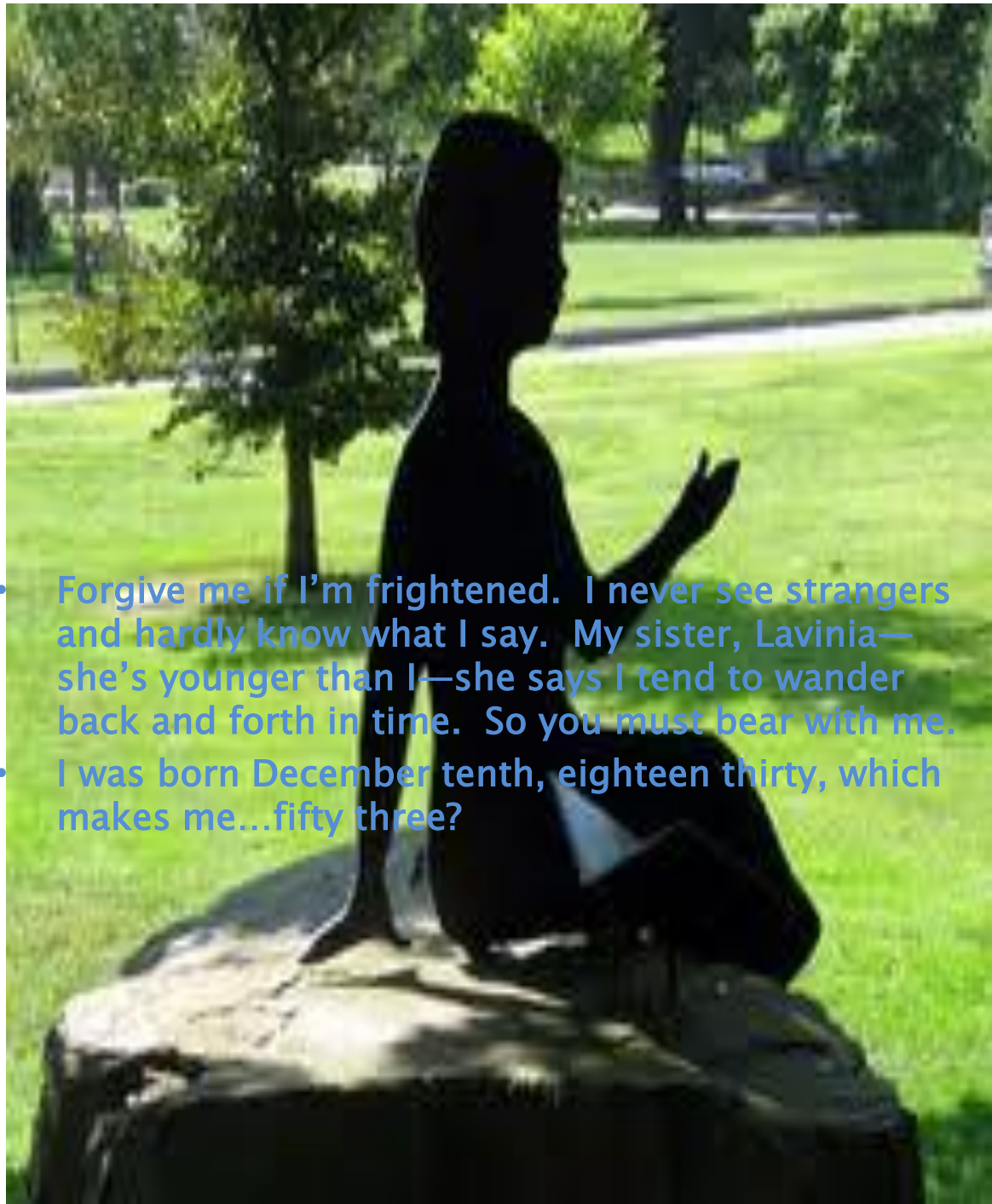


Emily Dickinson

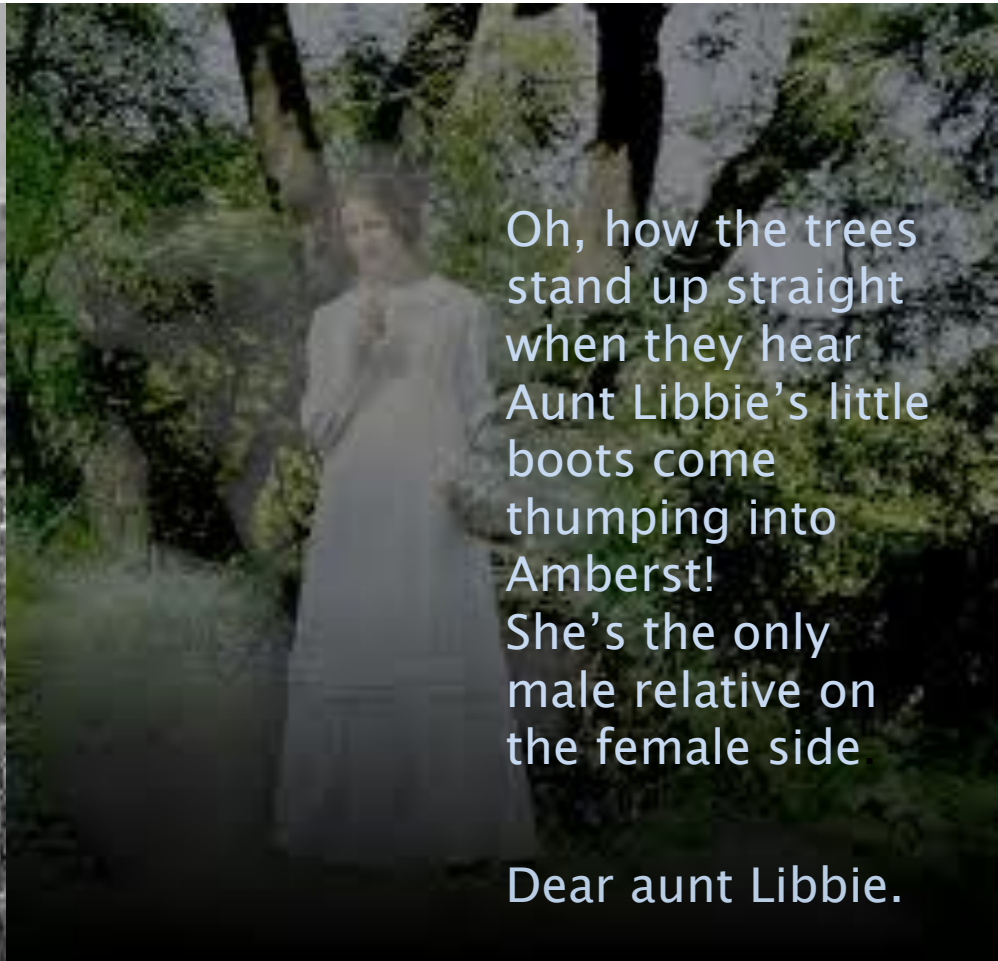


An excerpt from
The Belle of Amherst



- Forgive me if I'm frightened. I never see strangers and hardly know what I say. My sister, Lavinia—she's younger than I—she says I tend to wander back and forth in time. So you must bear with me.
- I was born December tenth, eighteen thirty, which makes me...fifty three?

Welcome to Amherst. My name is Emily Elizabeth Dickinson.
Elizabeth is for my Aunt Elisabeth Currier. She's Father's sister.



Oh, how the trees
stand up straight
when they hear
Aunt Libbie's little
boots come
thumping into
Amberst!
She's the only
male relative on
the female side

Dear aunt Libbie.

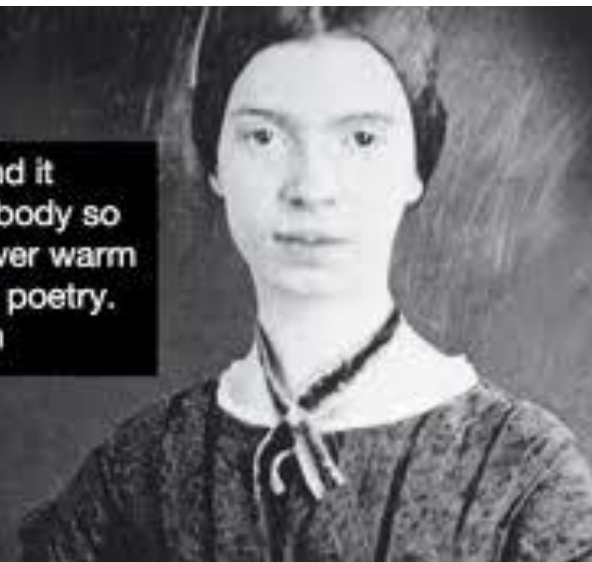
But I don't use my middle name anymore—since I became a poet.

Dwell in possibility...

*emily
dickinson*



If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that is poetry.
—Emily Dickinson



that it will never
come again is
what makes
life so sweet.
emily dickinson

Professor Higginson, the literary critic, doesn't think my poems are...

no matter. I've had seven poems published—anonously, to be sure. So you see why I prefer to introduce myself to you as a poet.



"It's been raining since you left me, now I'm drowning in the flood. You see, I've always been a fighter, but without you I give up."



A word is dead when it is said. Some say...

A mother is one to whom you hurry whe...

After great pain, a formal feeling comes...

Anger as soon as fed is dead - 'Tis starvi...

Beauty is not caused. It is.,

Because I could not stop for death, He ki...

Dogs are better than human beings beca...

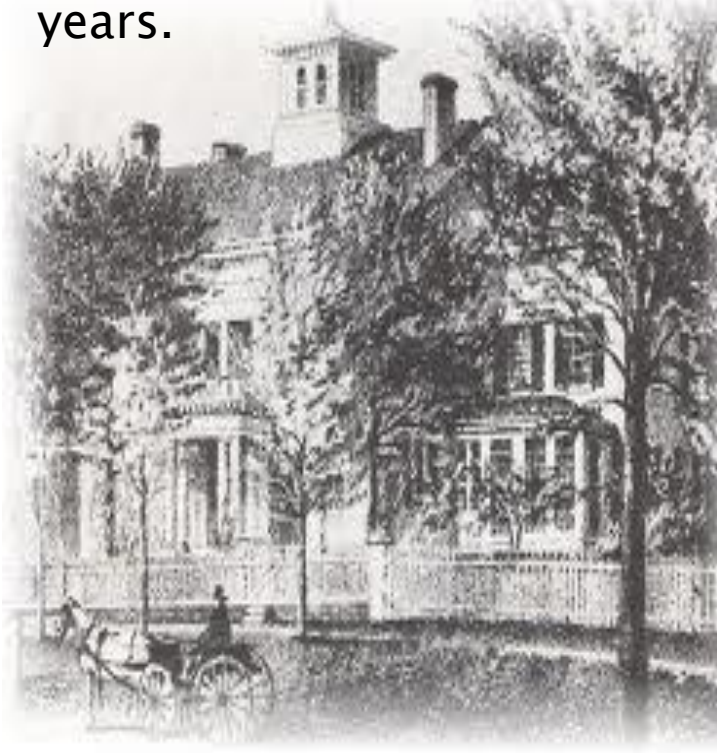
Dwell in possibility.,

Dying is a wild night and a new road.,

Find ecstasy in life; the mere sense of liv...



Here in Amherst, I'm known as Squire Edward Dickinson's half-cracked daughter. Well...I am! The neighbors can't figure me out. I don't cross my father's ground to any house or town. I haven't left the house for years.



What should we do in our literary landscape?



Emily Dickinson's Garden

The Soul selects her own Society— Then—shuts the Door



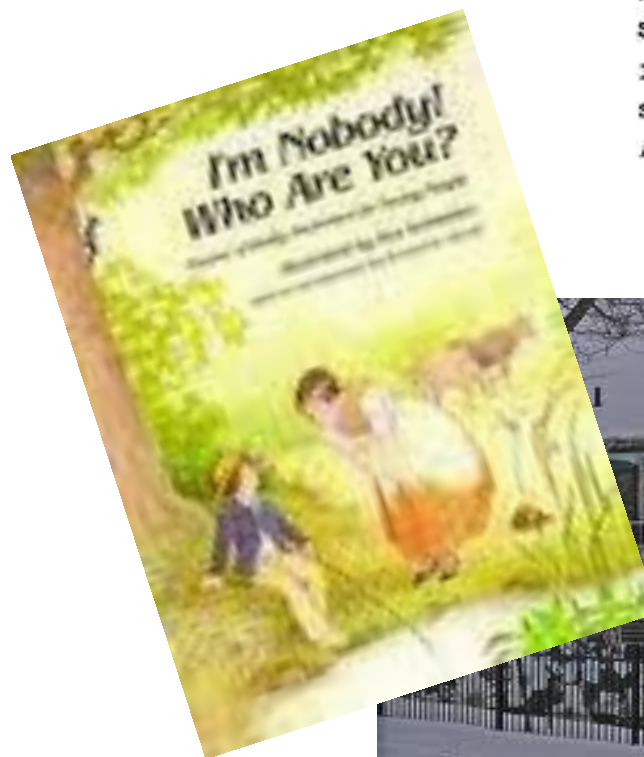
Why should I socialize with village gossips? There goes one of them now—
Henrietta Sweetser—Everyone knows Henny.

She'd even intimidate the anti-Christ. Look at her! She's strolling by the house,
trying to catch a glimpse of me. Would you like that?



The Awkwardness of Childhood
Transfigured into Grace

As though the wonders
Stream on the floor
Of the whole world
Were but egg shells
And bits of crystal
She dreaded breaking
In further fragments,
She went as tiptoe
As ballerinas go.



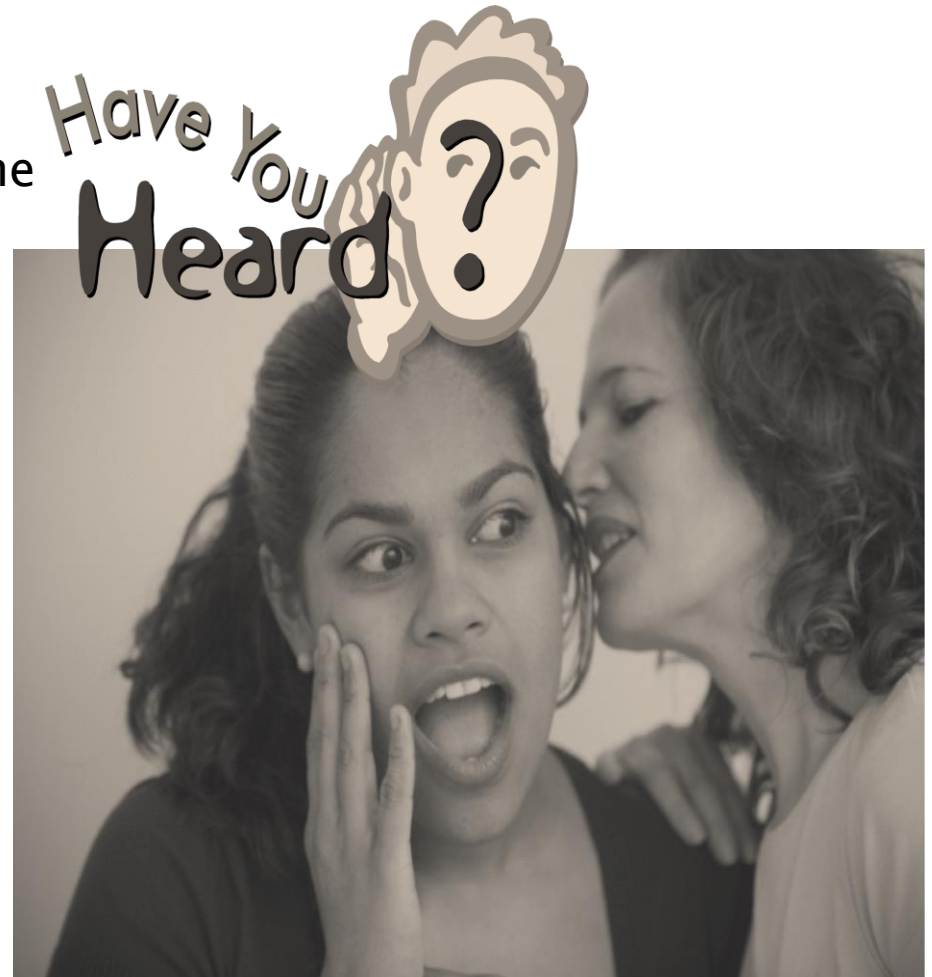
So I give them something to talk about. I dress in white all year round, even in winter. “Bridal White,” Henny calls it.



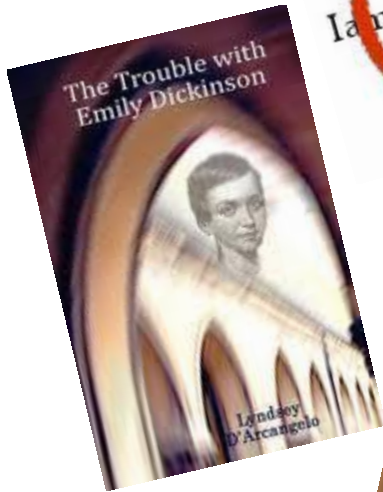
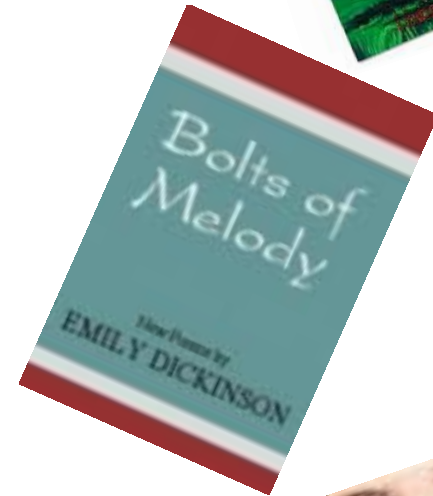
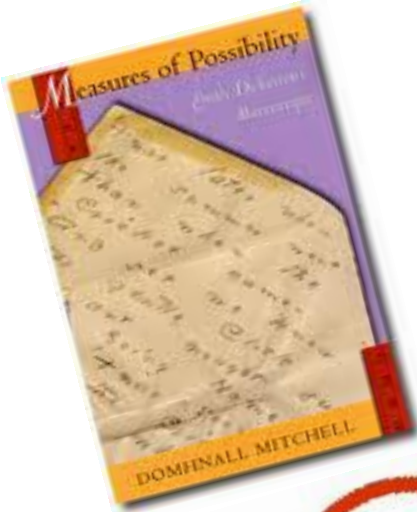
“Dear, dear! Dresses in bridal white,
she does, every day of the blessed
year. Year in, year out.

Disappointed in love as a girl,
so I hear.

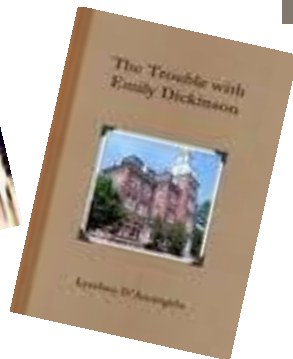
Poor creature. All so very sad.
And her sister, Lavinia, a spinster
too. Didn't you know? Oh, yes.
Stayed unmarried just to be at home
and take care of Miss Emily.
Two old maids in that big house.
What a lonely life, to shut yourself
away from good people like us.”



Indeed!

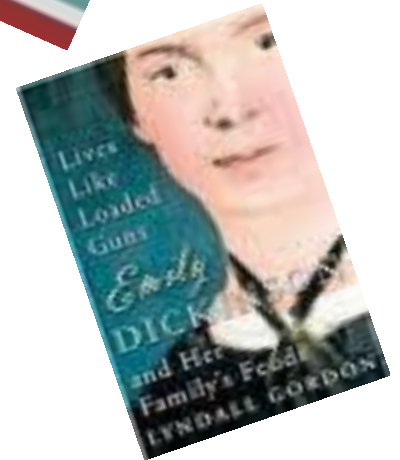


 Iambic Pentameter

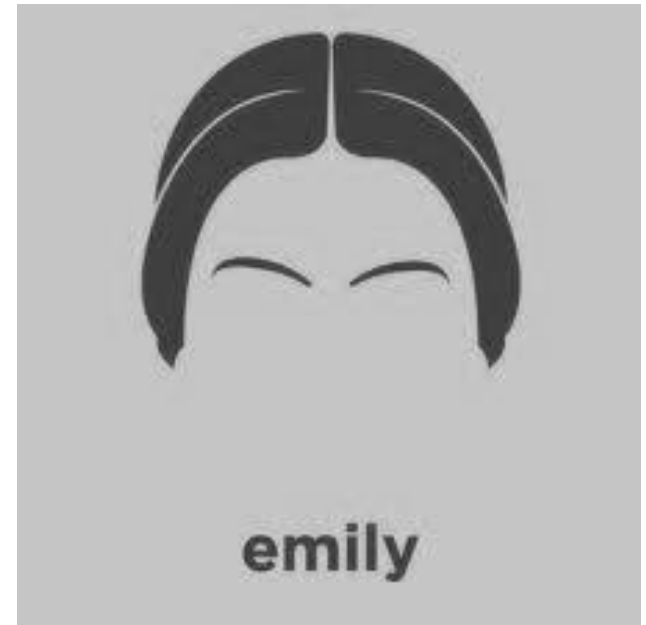


I'm Nobody! Who are you?
Are you – Nobody – Too?
Then there's a pair of us!
Don't tell! they'd advertise – you know!

How dreary – to be – Somebody!
How public – like a Frog –
To tell one's name – the livelong June –
To an admiring Bog!



You should see them come to the door, bearing gifts, craning their necks, trying to see over Vinnie's shoulder. But I'm too fast for them. I've already run upstairs two steps at a time. And I hide there until they leave. You can imagine what they make of that!



One old lady came to the door the other day to get a peek inside. I surprised her by answering the door myself. She stammered something about looking for a house to buy. To spare the expense of moving, I directed her to the cemetery.





**The brain is
wider than
the sky.**

- Emily Dickinson
(1830 - 1886)



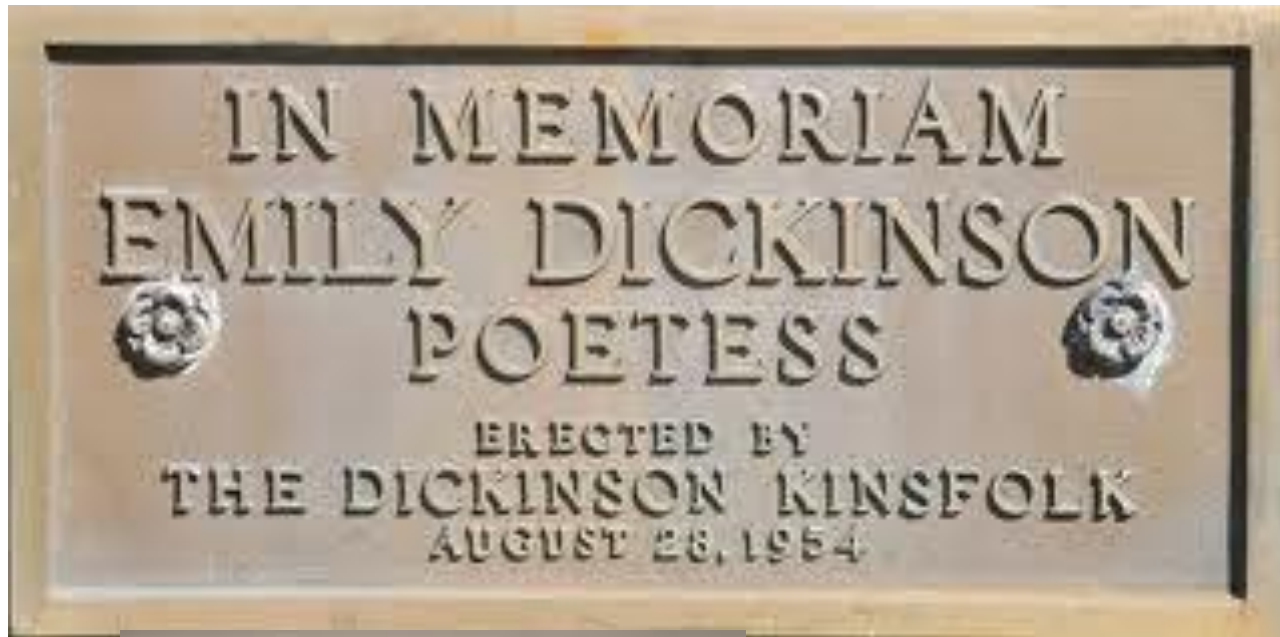
*Emily Dickinson
was a poet who
lived in Amherst,
Massachusetts.*

*Emily Dickinson
was a poet who
lived in Amherst,
Massachusetts.*

My Emily
Dickinson

*Emily Dickinson
was a poet who
lived in Amherst,
Massachusetts.*

*Emily Dickinson
was a poet who
lived in Amherst,
Massachusetts.*

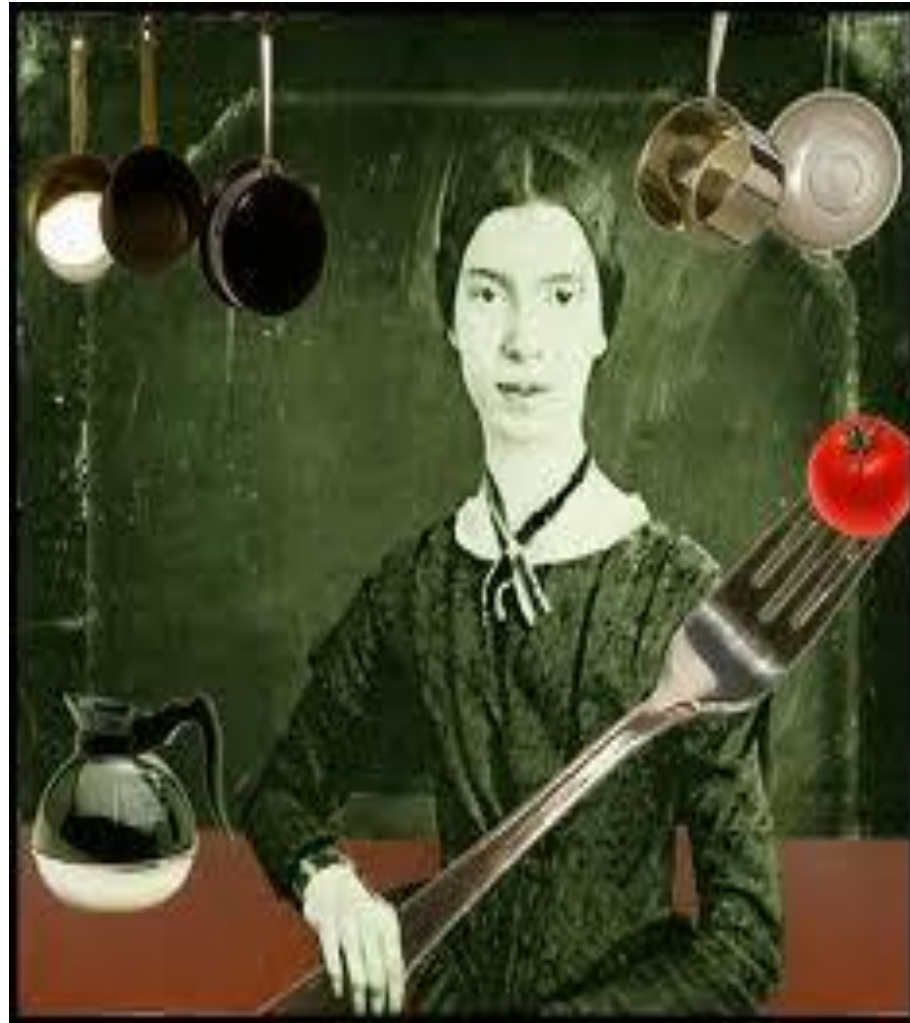


Emily Dickinson's Black Cake

(These are the ingredients;
I love Emily Dickinson, but
doubt I'd love this cake—
which takes nearly 5 hours
to bake, by the way)

½ lb sugar
½ lb butter
5 eggs
1 / 8 pt molasses
½ lb flour
½ tsp baking soda
½ tsp nutmeg
1 tsp cloves
1 tsp mace
1 tsp cinnamom
1 / 8 pt brandy
1 lb raisins
2 / 3 lb currants
2 / 3 lb citron

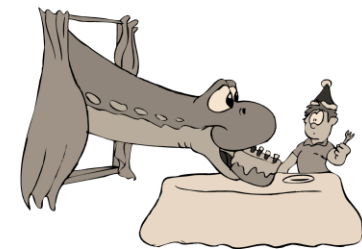
From her window she would
lower a basket containing
slices of cake wrapped in
poems to awaiting children



Updated Recipe from Katie Stewart via Google

- 10 oz flour
- 1 tsp mixed spice (allspice)
- 1 tsp salt
- 10 oz butter
- 8 oz brown sugar
- 4 extra large eggs
- 1 Tbs black treacle (i.e. molasses)
- ½ tsp vanilla
- 8 oz each currants, sultanas (golden raisins), and raisins
- 4 oz each dried cherries and dried strawberries
- 2 oz chopped almonds
- 4 Tbs brandy

Cream butter and sugar, mix in eggs, molasses, vanilla and beat together. Add flour and mix in. Stir in fruit and brandy. Spoon into 8-inch cake pan and cook in pre-heated 300 F oven for 1 ½ hours, then lower temp to 275 F and bake a further 2 ½ hours. Seems like it would be a bit like spice cake or fruit cake. I'm willing to try this one, but for now prepare for my version of this.



Why could I not resist adding this seeming non sequetor ?

Please read as many of her over 1700 poems (short!) as possible.

Some are inspired; some could use revisions (which we shouldn't dare make but which are fun to consider!)

“Publication is the auction of the mind.” E.D.



Please, especially you poets and actors among us, watch the extraordinary performance by Julie Harris of *The Belle of Amherst*, bringing to life the spirit, soul, sadness, “sass” and verse of America’s most prominent woman poet, who might have so easily remained unknown. You can stream the production on Netflix and watch instantly and repeatedly.



Mrs. Harrell and Emily Dickinson BFF

