

Because I could not stop for Death (712)

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 –

DRA Comment: The simplicity of Dickinson's poetry belies its depth. It reflected her life, much of which was led in solitude in one house. She was rarely seen outside her home. Her poetry was not discovered (and published) until after she died. Each of her poems is named after the first line of her poetry (not by her, but by those who found her poems after she died).