

Poem #1
For Emily

Emily Dickinson
said it all—
Of time
And timid hope
Though Wrought of Sterner Stuff.

Absent any normalcy
The punctuation—
Breathless
Taut
Beating,
Like a
Slow
Bass
Drum—
With a pierced heart
That bleeds at every pump.

She had the gift
That no one loved
Until her own mortality was spun.

A footnote to her troubled life
A fire to every would-be poet
Or half-lived dream.

Telling us how much
And where
And in what ways
We are—
We humans
We birds
We streams.

In slant rhyme—
In whispered moans.
Until we, like her,
Are leaching poetry
From our bones.

Poem #2

The Cantaloupe Has No Taste

"The cantaloupe has no taste!"
Such a disappointment
after a summer
of voluptuous tomatoes
sweet nectarines
tart raspberries
and milky corn.

We made lusty salads
silky Peach Melbas
tangy gazpachos
and ate to our hearts' content.

We feasted on the land's wares
and noted how the weather
did its peculiar thing
with crazy hot, humid days
and sultry nights
mixed with thunder, lightning,
tropical rains.

We sat around the table
happy, full,
enjoying each other's company
on a late summer's day.

And so
the cantaloupe that had no taste
seemed a bit of a shame.

No matter.

We filled up on more raspberries
and shared our bounty
as only longtime friends can do
while the darkness settled in
and the wild creatures danced
in the nearby woods,
as we told each other stories
of how best to dodge a bear
make three-bean salad
paint a picture
or write a refrain.

Poem 3

The Poetry Hunt

The right word,
The best word,
The heartfelt word—
We poets hunt,
And then we hunt some more.
Should it be beacon or fire?
Passionate
Amorous
Or simply desire?

And if the shoe fits,
Must we wear it?
Or should our foot be handsomely shod?

No poet is an island.
We are weaving around and about
In all the world's history,
In a dance with every poet we ever loved.
We are part of the main.

We have Dickinson's passion
Donne's power
Shakespeare's breadth
Langston's pain
Edna's sensuality
Roque's love.

The right word,
The best word
The heartfelt word—
And then all the words
Get flung together, conjuring
Longing
Remembrance
Newness
Joy
Rage
Comfort

Unity

As we join together
In our quest to cherish
Each other's poetry.

The chance to be together
In a world we've created
From dust and air
From history, imagination
And yes, from Words.

Writing poetry
Is like making soup—
We swish together
the basic ingredients
Then toss in a pinch of
The unknown—
Our wishes, hopes
Secrets and dreams.

And then, there it is
Like a miracle—
Words that have become a poem,
And that poem
Becomes part
Of something wonderful,
A world that is filled
With our heartfelt words
Because poetry
Is spilling out of everyone
Every day
Even on the days we forget to
Say it out loud.