



**LIVE WITH YOURSELF  
ACCORDING TO EMILY DICKINSON  
DANIELA LA MATTINA**

Have you ever been able to shut yourself up at home, turn on the computer and go, travel the world, discover social networks and improbable friends, blogs, where you can make your own ideas heard, since we are all commentators, and distant countries that drag you and make you dream?

Sometimes you would like not to leave the house anymore and this is what an American writer, one of the most sensitive and interesting of the time and of all times, must have thought in 1862: "I don't go home anymore," she wrote in a letter, and so it was. Emily Elizabeth Dickinson (December 10, 1830–May 15, 1886) at 32 years old closed herself at home, describing an infinite world in her countless poems. Of course she did not have a computer and not even the internet, her window on the world was herself and introspection. She opened the door a few times to talk to some friends and then, she was afraid that the world outside would contaminate her. She wanted to remain as pure as her white robe that she wore every day. She had had a great love in her life and mostly unhappy, but who has not had one! Even many or too many unhappy, but certainly does not shut himself in the house for this. Emily herself admitted that she had overcome the drama of a love that consumes you day after day and that she wanted to close in on herself simply because she wanted to be with herself and with no one else. The world she sought was the inner one. Her choice of life was solitude, a respectable human experience, not to pray and soothe the evils of the world, but to better reflect and externalize her ego and an elusive, hermetic universe at times through her poetry, tangible at the same time, probably objective and concrete.

She wrote her 1775 poems for herself, in life she published only seven in fact. And at her death this immense spiritual patrimony was found, where the absolute and the relative are

perfectly combined: allusive, sometimes enigmatic poems, the verses of which still express today the Mystery of Life, Immortality, Human Solitude, the Platonic Love, but also Sensual Love, and Nature that she described with meticulous details, photographing it and almost letting you participate in its enchantment, through the music of the birds or the infinite blue of the sky. Dickinson's original style profoundly influenced the direction of 20th-century poetry. Her short lines and verses about her inner life, thoughts and feelings give her one of the most distinctive voices in the American poetry to this day.

Many of her rhymes today have become aphorisms used by teenagers in SMS and on Facebook. Emily didn't know it, but her latent desire and after all also her destiny was, finally at home, wandering on the INTERNET!!!

Her life could help us today, when the Covid 19 world emergency has confined us at home for a long time, to understand that before the world, before people, there is our I, our inside, our life which is important, maybe the most important thing. We have to know us, to learn to live with ourselves, our thoughts, sensations and emotions. Only accepting us we can discover the world and live, live, live.

Here there are some of the most famous and interesting poems by Emily Dickinson used by the young in their facebook's profiles in lockdown period for Covid-19 emergency which helped them to express their sensations appropriately learning to live with themselves, their inner world and technology. Words used are: Death, Darkness Love, Change, Hope.

The same words which have characterized the new sensibility of people in lockdown and overall children and teenagers. In Emily's poetry we can find in fact a sort of relief because we can find the solutions to our drama of loneliness and imprisonment already lived by the poet who conveys us the right attitude towards isolation that can be also joy, self-consciousness and happiness.

Let's start with the sense of immortality which all us are looking for expressed by the poem:

"Unable are the Loved to die."

Unable are the Loved to die  
 For Love is Immortality,  
 Nay, it is Deity –  
 Unable they that love – to die  
 For Love reforms Vitality  
 Into Divinity.

It's really true that love never dies. It is the essence of all relationships. In this, those who love and are loved shall never die. This poem is about immortality achieved by love. Then love is so important that it can give us the opportunity to live forever. Without love the death is sure then if we want to live forever we have to find a wonderful love in our life and it's sure we will be immortal.

Let's continue with Love with a brief poem which says so much by saying so little. Only a genius can do it !

That love is all there is.

That love is all there is,  
Is all we know of Love;  
It is enough, the freight should be  
Proportioned to the groove

Emily says that is impossible to define what Love is and there is not any need for definition. Love is defined in fact by sensations and emotions only. It's all.

We can feel how important love is by feeling how deep the pain of love lost, the groove left behind. The groove is deep because love is heavy and important for us. It implies all our life but we need Love to live.

After Love and Immortality Hope is the best image to understand how to change our life with the poem:

HOPE

"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.

The poem seeks to remind readers of the power of hope and how little it requires of people. The speaker makes it clear that hope has been helpful in times of difficulty and

has never asked for anything in return. Hope gives people the strength to carry on, and it's at its most useful when circumstances are at their worst.

The poem argues that hope can be especially helpful in the most extreme situations and that people should therefore rely on it as a precious resource.

"Hope" is as a feathered creature that dwells inside the human spirit. This feathery thing sings a wordless tune, not stopping under any circumstances.

Its tune sounds best when heard in fierce winds. Only an incredibly severe storm could stop this bird from singing. The "Hope" bird has made many people feel warm.

The speaker has heard the bird's singing in the coldest places, and on the weirdest seas. But in the speaker's experiences, even the most extreme ones, the bird has never asked for anything in return.

Using extended metaphor, the poem portrays hope as a bird that lives within the human soul; this bird sings also coming rain or shine, gale or storm, good times or bad. The poem argues that hope is miraculous and almost impossible to defeat. Furthermore, hope never asks for anything in return—it costs nothing for people to maintain hope. Then we close with a really meaningful poem which represents so clearly sensations which all human beings have lived during their imprisonment in their house for Pandemic.

We get used to the dark

"We get used to the dark  
We get used to the dark  
when the light is off;  
after the neighbor held up the lamp  
who witnesses his farewell,

for a moment we move uncertainly  
because the night remains new to us,  
but then the view adapts to the darkness  
and we face the road with our heads held high.

So it is with larger darkness -  
those nights of the soul  
where no moon makes us sign,  
no inner star shows itself.

Even the bravest first gropes  
a little, sometimes it hits a tree,  
it beats our forehead;  
but, learning to see,

or the darkness is altered  
or somehow your eyes get used to it  
in the deep night,  
and life goes almost straight. “

This poem is about humanity and our general fear of the future or the unknown.

With “We grow accustomed to the Dark” and the rest of the first stanza, it’s stating that as we are surrounded in fear we become used to it, live in it, thrive in it. But there are times that this Darkness is not able to control people, and these people adapt to whatever fears or horrors they may see. Stanza four tells of how of these people that resist the Darkness, there are a few that will undergo some sort of realization that sets them free of their fears and allows them to see truly, unhindered by emotional distortion. At this time the final stanza explains that the previously spoken is a turning point in the existence of the Darkness itself—that people either succumb to their fears and live without question of reality or people achieve a mental greatness that allows them to transcend the Darkness and mold it into whatever they desire it to be, effectively granting them control of their own perception of reality. This is the story of human nature.

Then we thank Emily for her words, images, beauty and humanity which have helped us to discover the same universe that she loved improving ourselves and accepting our Life sometimes in difficulties and not easy to live .

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