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Emily Dickinson

Selected poems

Success is counted sweetest

Success is counted sweetest
By those who ne'er succeed.
To comprehend a nectar
Requires sorest need.
Not one of all the purple Host
Who took the Flag today
Can tell the definition
So clear of victory
As he defeated – dying –
On whose forbidden ear
The distant strains of triumph
Burst agonized and clear!

“Hope” is the thing with feathers –

“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.

Why do I love you, sir

Why do I love You, Sir?
Because..
The Wind does not require the Grass To answer
Wherefore when He pass
She cannot keep Her place.
Because He knows
and Don’t You
And We know not
Enough for Us
The Wisdom it be so

Wild nights - Wild nights!

Wild nights - Wild nights!
Were I with thee
Wild nights should be
Our luxury!

Futile - the winds -
To a Heart in port -
Done with the Compass -
Done with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden -
Ah - the Sea!
Might I but moor - tonight -
In thee!

Tell all the truth but tell it slant

Tell all the truth but tell it slant —
Success in Circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise
As Lightning to the Children eased
With explanation kind
The Truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind —