

Trees

Emily Dickinson

The Trees like Tassels hit and swung
There seemed to rise a Tune
From Miniature Creatures
Accompanying the Sun

Far Psalteries of Summer
Enamoring the Ear
They never yet did satisfy
Remotest when most fair

The Sun shone whole at intervals
Then Half then utter hid
As if Himself were optional
And had Estates of Cloud

Sufficient to enfold Him
Eternally from view
Except it were a whim of His
To let the Orchards grow

A Bird sat careless on the fence
One gossiped in the Lane
On silver matters charmed a Snake
Just winding round a Stone

Bright Flowers slit a Calyx
And soared upon a Stem
Like Hindered Flags Sweet hoisted
With Spices in the Hem

'Twas more I cannot mention
How mean to those that see
Vandyke's Delineation
Of Nature's Summer Day!

About the Poet

Emily Elizabeth Dickinson (December 10, 1830–May 15, 1886) was an American poetess, born in Amherst, Massachusetts. She is regarded as one of America's quintessential poets of the nineteenth century. She lived an introverted and hermetic

life, and published very few of her poems in her lifetime. Her compositions, 1789 poems in all, were published posthumously.

Her poetry is characterized by unconventional capitalization and extensive use of dashes, along with unusual imagery and lyric style.

About the Poem

The poem describes a beautiful cloudy summer's day and depicts how the sun appears and disappears behind the clouds. It is a overcast sky that can enfold the sun till eternity. But the whimsical sun comes out at times to do his duty as to help the orchards grow, the birds and snakes and many other lives to sustain.

Glossary

tassels : Short pieces of wool or other material tied together to decorate a piece.

miniature: Very small insects, germs, bacteria etc.

psalteries : Collection of religious songs sung by bards in praise of God.

enamoring: enchanting

whim: a wish which occurs suddenly, cynicism.

slit: pierce, cut

calyx: outer case of a bud

delineation: graphic verbal description

1. Choose the correct alternative:

- (a) "There seemed to rise a Tune"
From where do you feel it seems to rise the tune?
- (i) seaside (ii) trees
(iii) colonies (iv) school
- (b) "To let the orchards grow"
What do you understand by orchards?
- (i) garden of fruits (ii) agricultural fields
(iii) clumps of trees (iv) a group of administrations

2. Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

- (a) Enamoring the ear.....
What enamors the ear?
- (b) "The sun shone whole at intervals-
Then half -then utter hid-"
What do you understand about the sun here?
- (c) Why is the bird careless on the fence?
- (d) "On silver matters charmed a snake....."
What does the snake symbolize?
- (e) "Bright flowers slit a calyx....."
Interpret the line in your own words.

3. Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

- (a) What do you understand by psalteries of summer?
- (b) How would you explain the image of the "Hindered Flags"?
- (c) Why does the author capitalize pronouns referring to the sun?
- (d) Discuss the central idea of the poem.

4. Answer the following in 150 words each:

- (a) What imagery does the poet use to delineate summer's day more picturesquely?
- (b) Give examples from the poem to show that great poetry is a result of close observation of natural phenomena.