

CXXVIII

by Emily Dickinson

I heard a fly buzz when I died;
The stillness round my form
Was like the stillness in the air
Between the heavens of storm.

The eyes beside had wrung them dry,
And breaths were gathering sure
For that last onset, when the king
Be witnessed in his power. 5

I willed my keepsakes, signed away
What portion of me I
Could make assignable,-and then
There interposed a fly, 10

With blue, uncertain, stumbling buzz,
Between the light and me;
And then the windows failed, and then
I could not see to see. 15

1. Find the meter of the following two lines:

I heard a fly buzz when I died;
The stillness round my form

How would you describe the meter of this poem?

2. What is the rhyme scheme of this poem? Write it on the poem. Note the lines that use slant rhyme with a star. What effect does slant rhyme have on the poem?

3. What is happening to the narrator of this poem? How is she dealing with it?

4. What is the narrator expecting to see? What happens instead?

5. How is the fly used as a symbol in this poem?

6. Find an example of the following:

metaphor

onomatopoeia

oxymoron

simile