

"I'm nobody! Who are you?" – Emily Dickinson

*I'm nobody! Who are you?
Are you nobody, too?
Then there's a pair of us — don't tell!
They'd banish us, you know.*

*How dreary to be somebody!
How public, like a frog
To tell your name the livelong day
To an admiring bog!*

At school, being popular sometimes seems like the most important thing in the world. We often think that being the center of attention would be fantastic — like being a famous movie star or athlete. That's what Jesse Aarons thinks in *Bridge to Terabithia* until he meets Leslie Burke. Yet the speaker in Emily Dickinson's poem, "I'm nobody! Who are you?" readily admits to being an outsider. What's more, she even seems to like it. She says it would be "dreary" to be "somebody."

Is she crazy? Who would want to be an outsider? Think about it for a moment. Who would really want to be an insider? As an outsider, a "nobody," the speaker is not forced to be "public." She does not have to face the scrutiny or disapproval of people who are likely to be jealous of her popularity. She does not have to play games, put on an act, or keep trying in order to be a somebody. She can be herself and be comfortable. What's more, she is not alone.

What does it mean? The poem's first stanza tells how the speaker meets a fellow "nobody" – a friend. Together, the two nobodies can enjoy each other's company and their shared anonymity. As a pair, they aren't really nobodies anymore. That's why the speaker says, "Don't tell! / They 'd banish us, you know." She understands that once you have another "nobody" at your side, you aren't really a "nobody" anymore. And she doesn't want to be banished or kicked out from what she sees as a society of nobodies. She's comfortable there. In the second stanza, the tone of the poem changes. The speaker sounds confident. Perhaps it is her discovery that there are other people like her – other "nobodies" – that makes her feel strongly that being a "somebody" isn't such a great idea. She realizes that having a friend who understands you and accepts you as you are is more important than being admired by a lot of people or being in the "in" crowd.

In the poem's second stanza, the speaker also makes a strange comparison. She says that being a somebody is like being a frog. What does this simile mean? Aside from Kermit, there aren't many celebrity frogs around. Why does the speaker choose that amphibian as her representative of a public creature? It's because frogs make a lot of noise. The poem says that frogs, though they can croak and make themselves heard and be noticed, are noticed only by "an admiring bog." The bog is the frog's environment, not the frog's friend. So who cares what the bog thinks?

That's what the poem says about being a "somebody" who gets noticed by an admiring public. Frequently, the relationship is impersonal and distanced, not like a real friendship. Somebodies may have many admirers, but they might not be able to make those personal connections that real friendship offers.

When composing "I'm nobody! Who are you?" it is likely that Emily Dickinson was writing from the heart. She was one of American literature's most reclusive figures. Apart from one trip to Philadelphia, one trip to Washington D.C., and a few trips into Boston, Dickinson spent almost her entire 56 years in her hometown of Amherst, Massachusetts. After she turned 40, she never left the boundaries of her family's property in Amherst. This unusual

life helped Dickinson to feel a bond with people who see themselves as being outsiders and unimportant. Yet, to think of her as a friendless hermit would be incorrect. In fact, the poet had a small number of intense and lasting friendships. These important relationships demonstrate the main idea expressed in "I'm Nobody": Companionship is the best remedy for a feeling of exclusion.

"I, Too, Sing America" – Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.

*I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.*

*Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.*

*Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed--*

I, too, am America.

When Langston Hughes wrote the poem "I, Too" (1932), African Americans were not accepted. Blacks were discriminated against, killed violently, separated from using the same facilities and being in the same place as whites, just to name a few. The division between whites and blacks was clearly prevalent, with whites faring on the better side of the spectrum. Essentially, the United States of America was a racially discriminatory society reinforced by its racist laws. Therefore, Langston Hughes took the initiative to speak his mind via poetry, and this piece shows that.

The first line of the poem, "I, too, sing America," clearly signifies one thing: Just because his skin color is different from whites, he argues that he also sings the National Anthem/Star Spangle Banner the same as whites do. More important, the voice of the poem, the servant, argues that he too is American. The poem shows blunt disrespect from the master to his servant by sending him away every time visitors come, because he is ordered to eat in the kitchen - secluded from company. However, it does not faze him one bit, for he finds it very funny, supported by line 5: "But I laugh." Furthermore, while secluded in the kitchen, he eats well. Not only does he find amusement and eat well in his unpleasant situation, but the isolation also has a positive effect on him because he becomes stronger, verified by line 7: "And grow strong." This line shows that even though the servant pains in submission, he will not let it kill his spirit.

The heart of the poem demonstrates the strength of a black slave who stands up for what is right and says enough is enough: Tomorrow, I'll sit at the table When company comes. Nobody'll dare Say to me, "Eat in the kitchen," Then. [Lines 8-14]

This statement by the slave typifies the true definition of bravery. Yes, his body is subjugated, but his self-esteem resonates power; his body can be overtaken but his mind can not be conquered. With a strong mind, his attitude (toward taking orders) becomes somewhat rebellious.

Moreover, the slave expresses the following: When they finally see a black man at the table, they will recognize the beauty of an African American, and look stupid with shame. What an amazing poem by Langston Hughes. It is very deep and says a mouthful. The poem "I, Too" shouts for equality and freedom. Hughes depicts a slave who receives horrible treatment from his master, because he is sent away to eat alone in the kitchen when visitors come. This disrespect precipitates strength from the servant who boldly decides to take control and plans to not eat in the kitchen when ordered to do so.

The message of the poem is obvious: Blacks ought to have the same freedom as whites, and take a stand when need be. Hughes expresses his feelings by saying that blacks have equal rights too, like every white person in the world. The last line, "I, too, am America," is a perfect closure to an excellent poem. More important, the title - "I, Too" - has major importance, because it implicates that multiple races make up the face of America and not only whites.

Sonnet 130 – William Shakespeare

*My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.*

To say Shakespeare had a mastery of language would be an epic understatement. In his sonnet, "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun", Shakespeare displays his marquee use of iambic pentameter and rhyme to create a sarcastic and light tone while his speaker parodies other love poems by comparing his beloved to objects in nature that are more beautiful than her (1-12), though he leaves the reader with a serious message in the final couplet of the poem when he remarks that she is "as rare" as any woman of ideal beauty (13-14).

Shakespeare establishes in the opening line of the sonnet that his speaker is a man bitter that his mistress is not as beautiful as he would like, because her eyes "are nothing like the sun." In addition, that this sonnet is a parody of poems that make such extravagant and absurd comparisons between women and nature is seen throughout the poem, where this

speaker continually complains that “her [his wife] breasts are dun” (3), that “no such roses see I in her cheeks” (6), and of “the breath ... my mistress reeks” (8).

Shakespeare employs euphony throughout the poem to contribute to the light sarcastic tone and humor by using a number of long vowel sounds throughout the sonnet to create a pleasant experience for the reader and one that makes it seem as if the speaker is talking in a mocking manner, particularly about these notions that women should be as beautiful as nature. At least one such long vowel sound is present in every line and normally there are two to three of them per line in the sonnet: for example, the o-, ee-, and I- sounds in the excerpted part from line six written above are particularly evident to the reader.

The poem follows the typical abab-cdcd-efef-gg rhyme scheme of other English sonnets: the first two quatrains present the reader with the idea that the mistress is less beautiful than what the speaker sees in nature, by unfavorably comparing her to the sun, to coral, and to snow. The second continues that trend, with the speaker revealing that “no ... roses see I in her cheeks” and that “in perfumes is there more delight / than in ... [her] breath” (7-8). However, the third quatrain goes in a slightly different direction than the former two and instead of focusing on the differences between his mistress and nature, our speaker begins to focus upon how his lady is also unfavorable in comparison to other people: for example, he comments on how “music hath a far more pleasing sound” (10) than her voice and he also disdains how “when she walks, [she] treads on the ground” (12).

After reading through the first twelve lines of the sonnet, the reader feels all but assured of the speaker’s bitter feelings toward the mistress: after all, he so loosely piles on complaint after complaint about her. The effect is intentional. However, a closer look reveals that he is also beginning to show some appreciation for her as well: in line nine, for example, he talks about how he “loves to hear her speak.” This appreciation continues in the final couplet and Shakespeare reverses the meaning of the entire poem by leaving the reader with a serious message and drawing emphasis to it by slowing the pace with carefully placed commas: “And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare/ As any she, belied with false compare” (13-14). The speaker’s bitterness turns suddenly to charm as he expresses his delight in knowing his lady; it reveals he does not superficially believe, like others, that she should be as beautiful as objects in nature and realizes that she too is a normal person, and is more real and therefore more special to him than the women who represent “ideal beauty.” It leaves the reader thinking, even in today’s world, about the importance of honesty in our relationships with other people and about not expecting the unrealistic from them.

Upon Westminster Bridge – William Wordsworth

*Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear*

*The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.*

*Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!*

*The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!*

William Wordsworth was great English poet who gave English literature a new direction. He began a romantic era in English literature. He wrote "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" in 1802 and it was published in 1807. It is fourteen lines sonnet. This poem is about the city of London. It is said that he wrote this poem after getting inspired by the morning view (September, 3.) of city of London when he was going to France and in his way he passed the Westminster Bridge. It was the morning time and the view from the bridge somehow impressed him.

The poem begins with the description of beautiful scene of London which poet sees from the Westminster Bridge during his morning walk. In the first two lines of the poem he declares that for him the look of the London city is most beautiful on the earth and one who ignores it or passes without admiring it, must be a human with dull soul.

"A sight so.....smokeless air", in the next six lines he describes the beauty of London. He cites London as an emperor. In the morning time fog has covered the city like it is wearing a garment. There is no pollution in the air and the buildings like towers, domes, theatres, temples, etc, and ships floating in the Thames River are shining with the rays of rising sun.

In the next six lines he describes the natural beauty of the London city. "Never did Sun.....deep", in this line he says that he never saw such bright and beautiful Sunrise and grandeur look of Sun. The valleys, rocks and hills are glowing with its golden rays and this sight is very soothing and made him very calm.

"The river glideth.....lying still!", he further says about the beauty of Thames River. The flow of a river is a natural thing. Wordsworth had great love and respect towards the nature and he always considered natural things as any other living thing. In this poem he personifies the Thames River and tells that it flows according to its sweet free will. He also personifies the houses as he tells that during the peaceful morning every house seems in a sleepy mood. He also sees the London as a living thing as he cites the London as an emperor and center of city as its heart, which is lying still in the morning time.

The Lake Isle of Innisfree – William Butler Yeats

*I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.*

*And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.*

*I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.*

The poet declares that he will arise and go to Innisfree, where he will build a small cabin “of clay and wattles made.” There, he will have nine bean-rows and a beehive, and live alone in the glade loud with the sound of bees (“the bee-loud glade”). He says that he will have peace there, for peace drops from “the veils of morning to where the cricket sings.” Midnight there is a glimmer, and noon is a purple glow, and evening is full of linnet’s wings. He declares again that he will arise and go, for always, night and day, he hears the lake water lapping “with low sounds by the shore.” While he stands in the city, “on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,” he hears the sound within himself, “in the deep heart’s core.”

“The Lake Isle of Innisfree” is written mostly in hexameter, with six stresses in each line, in a loosely iambic pattern. The last line of each four-line stanza shortens the line to tetrameter, with only four stresses: “And *live alone* in the *bee-loud glade*.” Each of the three stanzas has the same ABAB rhyme scheme. Formally, this poem is somewhat unusual for Yeats: he rarely worked with hexameter, and every rhyme in the poem is a full rhyme; there is no sign of the half-rhymes Yeats often prefers in his later work.

“The Lake Isle of Innisfree,” published in Yeats’s second book of poems, 1893’s *The Rose*, is one of his first great poems, and one of his most enduring. The tranquil, hypnotic hexameters recreate the rhythmic pulse of the tide. The simple imagery of the quiet life the speaker longs to lead, as he enumerates each of its qualities, lulls the reader into his idyllic fantasy, until the penultimate line jolts the speaker—and the reader—back into the reality of his drab urban existence: “While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey.” The final line—“I hear it in the deep heart’s core”—is a crucial statement for Yeats, not only in this poem but also in his career as a whole. The implication that the truths of the “deep heart’s core” are essential to life is one that would preoccupy Yeats for the rest of his career as a poet; the struggle to remain true to the deep heart’s core may be thought of as Yeats’s primary undertaking as a poet.