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Impenetrable Interiority

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“Impenetrable Interiority” by Ilima Lewis (they/them)

ABSTRACT. *“Impenetrable Interiority” focuses on Emily Dickinson’s intimate letters to her sister-in-law, Susan Dickinson. There have often been speculations that Dickinson was a spinster-like shut-in whose love life was quite uneventful, and yet on the other hand, there has also been the speculation that Emily was deeply in love with Susan. Out of all of the people Emily wrote to, Susan was the correspondent who received the most. However, the circumstances were not so black and white, and are not easy for biographers to settle on. Her letters leave room for many questions.*



STUDENT BIO. Ilima Lewis is a senior English Major, Theatre Minor. They call Kansas home, but was born in Tallahassee, Florida, and has lived in Arizona as well. This semester they are involved with GSA and the Creative Writing Club. They submitted their Zine project titled, "Impenetrable Interiority" about Emily Dickinson in the History and Liberation category on Monday, January 31st.

Susan I Dreamed
Of You, Last
Night, And Send
A Carnation To
Indorse It ...

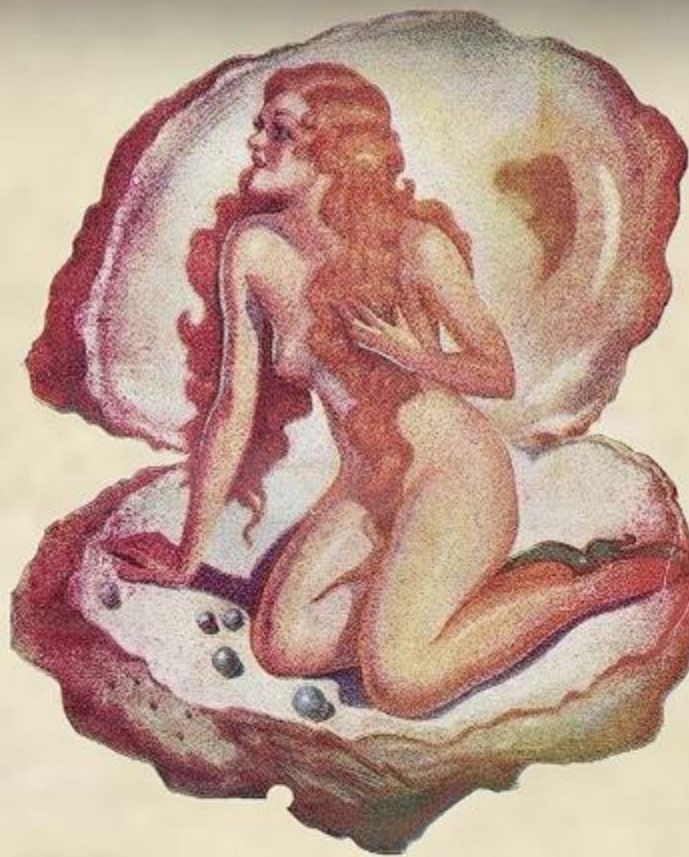


Dear Sue
One Of
The Sweetest
Messages I Ever
Received, Was,
"Mrs Dickinson
Sent You This
Cardinal Flower,
And Told Me
To Tell You
She Thought
Of You." ...

... Love
For You Darling -
How Can I Sleep
Tonight..?



Susan Knows
She Is A Siren -
And That At A
Word From Her,
Emily Would
Forfeit
Righteousness ...



Remember, Dear,
An Unfaltering
Yes Is My
Only Reply To
Your Utmost
Question ...



Her Breast Is Fit For Pearls,
But I Was Not A "Diver."
Her Brow Is Fit For Thrones
But I Have Not A Crest.
Her Heart Is Fit For Home -
I - A Sparrow - Build There
Sweet Of Twigs And Twine
My Perennial Nest.



To Own A
Susan Of
My Own
Is Of Itself
A Bliss -
Whatever
Realm I
Forfeit, Lord...



Only Woman
In The World,
Accept A
Julep...

So Sweet And Still, And Thee, Oh Susie, What Need I More, To
Make My Heaven Whole?

Sweet Hour, Blessed Hour, To Carry Me To You, And To Bring You
Back To Me, Long Enough To Snatch One Kiss, And Whisper
Good Bye, Again.

I Have Thought Of It All Day, Susie, And I Fear Of But Little Else,
And When I Was Gone To Meeting It Filled My Mind So Full, I
Could Not Find A Chink To Put The Worthy Pastor; When He
Said "Our Heavenly Father," I Said "Oh Darling Sue"; When He
Read The 100th Psalm, I Kept Saying Your Precious Letter All Over
To Myself, And Susie, When They Sang - It Would Have Made You
Laugh To Hear One Little Voice, Piping To The Departed. I Made
Up Words And Kept Singing How I Loved You, And You Had
Gone, While All The Rest Of The Choir Were Singing Hallelujahs.
I Presume Nobody Heard Me, Because I Sang So Small, But It Was
A Kind Of A Comfort To Think I Might Put Them Out, Singing
Of You. I A'nt There This Afternoon, Tho', Because I Am Here,
Writing A Little Letter To My Dear Sue, And I Am Very Happy. I
Think Of Ten Weeks - Dear One, And I Think Of Love, And You,
And My Heart Grows Full And Warm, And My Breath Stands Still.
The Sun Does'nt Shine At All, But I Can Feel A Sunshine Stealing
Into My Soul

Dearer you cannot be, for I love you so already, that it almost breaks my heart - perhaps I can love you anew, every day of my life, every morning and evening... Just write me every week one line, and let it be, "Emily, I love you," and I will be satisfied!



I add a kiss, shyly, lest there is somebody there!! Dont let them see, will you Susie? my heart is full of you, none other than you in my thoughts, yet when I seek to say to you something not for the world, words fail me; If you were here, and Oh that you were, my Susie, we need not talk at all, our eyes would whisper for us, and your hand fast in mine, we would not ask for language...



Sue - you can go or stay - There is but one alternative - We differ often lately, and this must be the last... You need not fear to leave me lest I should be alone, for I often part with things I fancy I have loved... Few have been given me, and if I love them so, that for idolatry, they are removed from me...

The healed Heart
shows it's shallow
scar
With confidential
moan -
Not mended by
Mortality
Are Fabrics truly
torn
To go its'
convalescent way
So shameless is
to see
More genuine
were Perfidy
Than such
Fidelity



To lose what we
never owned
might seem an
eccentric Bereavement
but Presumption
has its' Affliction
as actually as
Claim



I would have drowned
twice to save
you sinking, dear,
If I could only
have covered your
Eyes so you would'nt
have seen the Water.

