

## ***Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes***

*First, her tippet made of tulle,  
easily lifted off her shoulders and laid  
on the back of a wooden chair.*

*And her bonnet,  
the bow undone with a light forward pull.*

*Then the long white dress, a more  
complicated matter with mother-of-pearl  
buttons down the back,  
so tiny and numerous that it takes forever  
before my hands can part the fabric,  
like a swimmer's dividing water,  
and slip inside.*

*You will want to know  
that she was standing  
by an open window in an upstairs bedroom,  
motionless, a little wide-eyed,  
looking out at the orchard below,  
the white dress puddled at her feet  
on the wide-board, hardwood floor.*

*The complexity of women's undergarments  
in nineteenth-century America  
is not to be waved off,  
and I proceeded like a polar explorer  
through clips, clasps, and moorings,  
catches, straps, and whalebone stays,  
sailing toward the iceberg of her nakedness.*

*Later, I wrote in a notebook  
it was like riding a swan into the night,  
but, of course, I cannot tell you everything –  
the way she closed her eyes to the orchard,  
how her hair tumbled free of its pins,  
how there were sudden dashes  
whenever we spoke.*

*What I can tell you is  
it was terribly quiet in Amherst  
that Sabbath afternoon,  
nothing but a carriage passing the house,  
a fly buzzing in a windowpane.*

*So I could plainly hear her inhale  
when I undid the very top  
hook-and-eye fastener of her corset*

*and I could hear her sigh when finally it was unloosed,  
the way some readers sigh when they realize  
that Hope has feathers,  
that reason is a plank,  
that life is a loaded gun  
that looks right at you with a yellow eye.*

***Billy Collins***

# Taking Off Emily Dickinsons Clothes

**Ed Ochester**



## **Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes:**

*Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes* Billy Collins, 2000-07-01 A funny and moving collection from one of America's bestselling poets Billy Collins is one of America's best loved poets and comes armed with plaudits from John Updike E Annie Proulx He is one of Carol Ann Duffy's favourite living poets and this Selected is the first time he will be published in the UK From a poem about the relentless barking of next door's dog Another Reason Why I don't Keep a Gun in the House to an elegy to The Best Cigarette Just read one poem and you'll be a committed fan Billy Collins gets right to the heart of things He is one of the funniest poets writing today Billy Collins is a fantastic performer his readings at the Poetry festival in Aldeburgh were sold out as were all his US collections and will hopefully be brought over by the South Bank London in the Autumn His readings are unmissable

**Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes** Billy Collins, 2002 *Literature to Go* Michael Meyer, 2011-01-31 Literature to Go is the long trusted anthology The Bedford Introduction to Literature sized and priced to go it is a brief and inexpensive collection of stories poems and plays supported by class tested reliable pedagogy and unique features that bring literature to life for students Pref **Nine Horses** Billy Collins, 2012-07-26 Billy Collins is one of the world's most popular poets While his poems often begin in the everyday and domestic fans know that they might end anywhere and that they will lift their heads from the book to a world startlingly different from the one they had left moments before Billy Collins previous collection Taking Off Emily Dickinson's Clothes was an extraordinary success introducing thousands of readers to his exhilarating poetry for the first time By turns wildly funny and intensely moving Nine Horses has won Billy Collins even more admirers

**Emily Dickinson International Society Bulletin**, 1997 *Emily Dickinson* Connie Ann Kirk, 2004-06-30 Using updated scholarship and never before published primary research this new biography takes a fresh look at a genius of American letters **The World is a Text** Jonathan Silverman, Dean Rader, 2006 The book teaches readers the usefulness of learning to actively read their surroundings The new edition features a greatly expanded section on writing editing and making arguments This cultural studies reader directly engages the process of writing about the texts one sees in everyday life Its comprehensive and inclusive approach focuses on the relationship between reading traditional works such as short stories and poems and other less traditional ones such as movies the Internet race ethnicity and television For anyone who enjoys provocative and engaging material and is interested in developing an appreciation for diverse cultural literary works

*Visiting Emily* Sheila Coghill, Thom Tammara, 2000 Anthology of work by eighty poets explores the life and influence of Emily Dickinson Poems written in traditional and experimental forms Includes the following poets Archibald MacLeish John Berryman Yvor Winters Adrienne Rich Richard Eberhart Richard Wilbur Maxine Kumin Amy Clampitt William Stafford and Galway Kinnell

**Rain Taxi Review of Books**, 2003 **American Literary Scholarship** James Leslie Woodress, 1965 **American Poetry Now** Ed Ochester, 2007-03-08 American Poetry Now is a comprehensive collection of the best work from the renowned Pitt Poetry Series Since its inception in 1967 the series has been a vehicle for

America's finest contemporary poets The series list includes Poet Laureate Billy Collins Toi Derricotte Denise Duhamel Lynn Emanuel Bob Hicok Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner Ted Kooser Larry Levis Sharon Olds Alicia Suskin Ostriker Virgil Su rez Afaa Michael Weaver David Wojahn Dean Young and many others Throughout its forty year history the Pitt Poetry Series has provided a voice for the diversity that is American poetry representing poets from many backgrounds without allegiance to any one school or style American Poetry Now is a true representation of contemporary American poetry Ed Ochester series editor for nearly thirty years has assembled a quintessential selection along with biographies and photos an enlightening introduction and a suggested list for further reading all in a highly accessible format American Poetry Now is a sweeping anthology that will delight poetry fans students teachers and general readers alike *Alaska Quarterly Review*, 2001 Literature Robert DiYanni, 2001-07 This anthology offers a lively introduction to the study of fiction poetry and drama and is appropriate for introduction to literature courses as well as literature based composition courses Known for its clear presentation of the formal elements of literary analysis DiYanni's Literature effectively balances classical modern and contemporary works across the three major genres blending well known writers with a diverse gathering of newer international figures This literary breadth is supplemented by extensive coverage of writing about literature making DiYanni an excellent resource for literature instructors who want a full featured anthology Index of American Periodical Verse, 1998 **The Texas Review**, 2005 **Dancing with Joy** Roger Housden, 2007 Celebrating the many colors and faces of joy an anthology of ninety nine poems brings together the works of seventy international poets who explore their individual interpretations of joy **Being Alive** Neil Astley, 2004 Being Alive is the sequel to Staying Alive and is about being human about love and loss fear and longing hurt and wonder **Book Review Index**, 2003 Vols 8 10 of the 1965 1984 master cumulation constitute a title index *The Publishers Weekly*, 2001 The Honey Gatherers Maura Dooley, 2003 The Honey Gatherers takes its title from a phrase in Michael Ondaatje's The Cinnamon Peeler a poem which describes the need to be marked and marked out by love The search the sweetness the sting and the death of love are all to be found in this anthology Wide ranging in its inclusiveness The Honey Gatherers celebrates the great passions of John Donne Christina Rossetti Shakespeare Keats Sir Thomas Wyatt and the beloved Anon whilst con rming the extraordinary gift to this headlong debate of 20th century poets Pablo Neruda Lorna Goodison Brian Patten Adrienne Rich Tess Gallagher W H Auden Stevie Smith Dorothy Parker John Montague Thom Gunn Carol Ann Duffy and Sharon Olds are just some of those who meet in these pages Here are poems about romantic love the ideal of love the hurt of love lost or unrequited love and parting all you might expect to nd in such a gathering but here too are poems of friendship surprise celebration and consolation This is a book which explores Raymond Carver's big question And what did you want and offers some answers To call myself beloved to feel myself beloved on the earth Raymond Carver Late Fragment Most love poetry anthologies only cover the classics This one includes modern poets and erotic poetry as well

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