

### **\*Emily Town (Courtney)**

This poem alludes to death, perhaps by foul play. The poem plays off of memories and “messages”. Death is evident in this poem because of the ominous sound of the lines along with words such as “haunts” “left” and “angels”. It is an ominous little poem because there is a period at the end of each line, which creates suspense and further adds to a feeling of death/dying (a period is the end of a sentence, death is the end of a life). “Riches in a little room. / Is a phrase that haunts” seems to imply that whoever the speaker of this poem is speaking about is involved with the death through foul play. Riches would haunt you if they were stolen from someone after you killed them: they would bring memories back, in a Poe-esque kind of way. The poem plays off of different settings “Snow or a library” almost as if to say that a death occurred during the winter in a library. “Emily” in the title ties in with the “her” in the poem—perhaps Emily is the killer. It also seems as though the speaker is speaking to the deceased person, a ghost.

#### *Amendments*

Emily Town (craig)

This poem does seem to be about a loss, and could very well be about the death of a loved one, but I cannot say that I necessarily get the idea of foul play from the piece. The riches in a little room could simply be the things that a loved one left behind when they moved on from this person in life. On that note, it may have been a daughter gone off to college and Emily Town is the room her parents save for her visits home. It could also be a loved one that left behind an office or just left their things in ‘Her’ bedroom. The person leaving has no real identity and can thus really be anyone. In that sense, the mineral of somebody leaving may be their body being removed but their memory remaining, though I also acknowledge the possibility that it could be a celestial mist or ghost remaining, if you will. The band of angels seems to be a very light image and not as ominous as you were suggesting, though the fact that it apparently means something different than joy to the ‘Her’ in the poem (I assume this is Emily). I also cannot help but wonder if this is a poem about Emily Dickinson as “Riches in a little room” might be a reference to the fact that her work was really unpublished before it was found collected in an attic after her death. This could be the reference to death as well. The fact that all of these things adopt a new meaning could easily be a reference to ways she has used those images in poems, though I cannot think of any specific examples.

Emily Town (mike)

I wasn’t sure if mineral was only a way of describing a part of the person or if it possibly had some other sort of reference. Slang, specific type of mineral mined in a town, or a way of expressing the intimate earthly connection that’s absence haunts her. Being a town poem, the possibility of mineral being the dust left by someone who works in a mine, or the smell of it, anything that would leave with a person.

Emily Town (marina)

Alright, maybe I am wrong and way too fixed on Mrs. Dickinson, but the tone and use and some sort of meter is just very Dickinsonian in this poem, in addition to the Emily

reference in the title. Then there is the whole Emily Dickinson not being widely recognized as a poet until her death and the fact that her poems were all bound (by her) into fascicles and her dashes are still not really figured out, so perhaps we are completely misinterpreting Dickinson's poetry, and her own meaning might be long lost with time, hence the library and the message.

Emily Town Amendment: (matt)

A pretty good analysis, but a few things. One, your note about periods being symbolic of death carries less weight than it could since all the poems in this section are written that way, but it might be something that is played up in this poem in particular. Two, if a death occurred, I don't really get any sense of foul play. The death of a loved one from accident or disease can haunt you just as much if not more than the death of someone you've murdered. I got the sense that the subject of the poem ("Her") inherited things from the person who "left," but would rather have that person back than these "Riches in a little room." Finally, I don't think you've given much thought to what may be a very obvious allusion in the title of the poem: Emily Dickinson (yes, that one). Irregardless of the actual facts, the traditional image of Emily Dickinson is one of a recluse who stayed alone in her house writing poetry and, in the words of Lisa Simpson, "went crazy as a loon." The "little room" could be Dickinson's home, while the person who "left" might be a friend or lover who visits but does not stay with the recluse. It might be a poem about her loneliness and sense of abandonment, hinting at her supposed madness with words such as "haunts."

Emily Town (martin)

Maybe it's just this class and Dawn's obsession with Dickinson, but I first thought Emily was referring to Emily Dickinson since she's a prominent female poet of the past and Carson is a modern female poet trying her best. In this interpretation, I don't think Carson is accusing Dickinson of theft or plagiarism. The observations in your analysis are good, but the title of each town poem seems to be very important every time, and this title isn't nailed down at all. I know Dickinson secluded herself in a little room to write poetry, perhaps poems that would have made her rich, but these poems were found famous only after her death. So yes, there is death in this poem, and the way Dickinson lost some possible riches could be haunting to her or to "you." The line "Her since the mineral of you" follows "haunts" in the previous line so that the reader may think "haunts her" or "haunts you". To distinguish between "her" and "you" I either equate the two as both meaning Dickinson, or her meaning Dickinson and you being the reader – this would work with Carson's habit of talking to her readers in her poetry. Loss is placed in the poem as well with the two one-word lines – "Left." "Her." Combine the two and you got loss.

Emily Town (casey)

I wasn't sure if mineral was only a way of describing a part of the person or if it possibly had some other sort of reference. Slang, specific type of mineral mined in a town, or a way of expressing the intimate earthly connection that's absence haunts her. Being a town poem, the possibility of mineral being the dust left by someone who works in a mine, or the smell of it, anything that would leave with a person.

Emily Town (Allison)

I would really have liked to have had Emily Dickinson mentioned in this analysis. It sounds so much like her to me. I think this poem definitely does deal with death, but it also sounds like loneliness to me as well. She was alone very frequently, like the "crazy old woman in the attic," so the first lines about being haunted in a little room could be referring to that. I agree that the poem does sound like ghosts and other hauntings. Again, I definitely see death here, but I don't necessarily see murder. I'm not sure what message is left to her, but I'm sure there is more into Dickinson that can be read.

Emily Town: (courtney)

I did realize that this poem was about Emily Dickinson from the very start, but I wasn't sure how. Now, I think that the "treasures in a little room" are Dickinson's poems, which were found after her death. They haunt someone, perhaps publishers, a family member—this I'm not sure of—because they became so popular after her death. "Message" and "phrase" can relate to written poetry. "Snow or a library"—I'm not sure about this line. She created a "library" of sorts with her poetry, and she didn't leave home very often, perhaps even less so when there was snow on the ground. And maybe the messages in her poetry that people interpret today are not the messages that "It meant to / Her".

Emily Town (tom)

I don't know that I get the sense of foul play in this poem. I do however sense a cold dreariness, like regret or sadness or something. I get the sense that Emily is a child that is gone, or perhaps a childhood, I don't know why I just get that feel. I sense the longing for a person who has passed away in "since the mineral of you left." I also see a punning going on with the words snow in line 5 and angles in line 6 as if to allude to snow angles and perhaps its things like those that give me the illusion of a child being involved.

Emily Town (tiffany)

I totally did not get an allusions to death when I first read this, but, as Courtney proves, the supposition is completely plausible in that there are heavy, death-like words present in the poem ("haunts", "left", "angels"). Past that, I'm not sure. "Riches in a little room" seemed like a very Dickinsonian phrase to me, especially the word "little". I took the "her" to represent Dickinson and that she is haunted by the past "since the mineral of you. / Left." A mineral is sustenance, a supplement, essential for life and it seems like Emily is missing something that she once had, something she didn't think would leave. " Snow or a library. / Or a band of angels. / With a message is. / Not what. / It meant to. / Her." baffles me just a bit, but my first inclination was to suppose that snow, library, and angels were referring to an interpretation of something. What? I'm not sure, but the poem ends with the idea that these possible interpretations did not work for Dickinson. She had a different idea. I'm not sure how or if that all ties together, but....I tried.

Emily Town (monte)

I don't doubt that Emily is a reference to a specific person, but I have no idea what. I am unable to decipher the meaning of the first line, which I believe is preventing me from understanding the entire poem. Perhaps, the riches in a little room are the small things about a person that someone has fallen in love with. It is these small things (or the

memory of these small things) that haunts Emily since 'you' left. I read this more as a love poem. The haunting is only there because Emily is reminded of your absence, because these little qualities remind her that you are now gone. The referencing to 'snow, library, and band of angels' seems to be identifying what some of these riches are, and their external message means something different to her – snow and a library are quite arbitrary with no particular meaning, but to Emily, they remind her of the person who has left, and therefore they mean something much more to her.

Emily Town (abby)

I'm surprised that no reference to Emily Dickinson was brought up, as we have just been studying her. This may be some kind of ode to her or about her at least partially. The lines "since the mineral of you./ Left" could be a reference to Emily's isolation and loneliness at being left alone most of her life. Also the lines "With a message is./ Not what./ It meant to. Her." Demonstrate the communication by correspondence that Emily would have used for most of her isolated life. Because "Her." is an isolated line, we get an extreme picture of isolation here, and that's the life of Emily Dickinson, more or less.

Emily Bronte is another famous Emily that may be referenced here, but the poem goes along quite nicely with Dickinson.