

Emily Dickinson, "The first Day's Night had come" (probably Autumn 1862)

Text and apparatus from *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Variorum Edition*, R. W. Franklin (ed.), The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998 (labelled as Poem #423).

- 1     The first Day's Night had come –  
2     And grateful that a thing  
3     So terrible – had been endured –  
4     I told my Soul to sing –  
  
5     She said her strings were snapt –  
6     Her Bow – to atoms blown –  
7     And so to mend her – gave me work  
8     Until another Morn –  
  
9     And then – a Day as huge  
10    As Yesterdays in pairs,  
11    Unrolled its<sup>[1]</sup> horror in my face –     [Franklin "moves" apostrophe before the s]  
12    Until it blocked my eyes –  
  
13    My Brain – begun to laugh –  
14    I mumbled – like a fool –  
15    And tho' tis Years ago – that Day –  
16    My Brain keeps giggling – still.  
  
17    And Something's odd – within –  
18    That person that I was –  
19    And this One – do not feel the same –  
20    Could it be Madness – this?

*Division*    5 were |    7 gave |    16 still. ||    19 the |

**PUBLICATION:** *UP* (1935), 13, stanzas 1-3. The entire poem was published in Bingham, *New England Quarterly*, 20 (March 1947), 40-41, from a transcript of *A* (A Tr210). *Poems* (1955), 319; *CP* (1960), 195. *MB* (1981), 309-10, in facsimile. (J410)

*A* 10 Yesterdays] Yesterday *UP*<sub>35</sub> *P*<sub>37</sub> *NEQ*<sub>47</sub> 11 in] on *UP*<sub>35</sub> *P*<sub>37</sub>  
13 begun] began *NEQ*<sub>47</sub> 13-20] omitted *UP*<sub>35</sub> *P*<sub>37</sub>