

Richard Eberhart

(1904-2005)

Emily Dickinson (c.1930-86)

He saw a laughing girl  
And she said to him,  
I must take a man  
toward eternity.

Her flesh was soft and fleet,  
Her mouth was like a pose,  
And a spiritual drift  
Played about her flowing clothes.

She said she could not be  
An evidence of the free  
Unless she left her body  
To become immortality.

She took him in the main  
And held him in a trance  
Who never knew for thirty years  
Whether she was the dancer or the dance.

## II

She was the highest mark  
To which he set a snare.  
He held her in his clutch  
But she vanished in the air.

She departed with the years  
And rode upon her destiny  
While he was retained much  
In the hold of mystery.

Now he must forswear  
The roll of reality  
And must admit the truth  
Of what he cannot see.

She is gone with the wind  
And he is gone with the weather.  
Only in spirituality  
Can they be said to be together.

Pretend to the flesh,  
But the flesh will fall away.  
In timeless uselessness  
Love can have a stay.

He thought he held her  
When passion was high.

Time brings her to him  
In a long, in a wind-drawn sigh.