

Just lost, when I was saved!
Just felt the world go by!
Just girt me for the onset with Eternity,
When breath blew back,
And on the other side
I heard recede the disappointed tide!

Therefore, as One returned, I feel
Odd secrets of the line to tell!
Some Sailor, skirting foreign shores—
Some pale Reporter, from the awful doors
Before the Seal!

Next time, to stay!
Next time, the things to see
By Ear unheard,
Unscrutinized by Eye—

Next time, to tarry,
While the Ages steal—
Slow tramp the Centuries,
And the Cycles wheel!

I live with Him– I see His face–
I go no more away
For Visitor– or Sundown–
Death's single privacy–

The Only One– forestalling Mine–
And that– by Right– that He
Presents a Claim invisible–
No wedlock– granted Me–

I live with Him– I hear His Voice–
I stand alive– Today–
To witness to the Certainty–
Of Immortality–

Taught Me– by Time– the lower Way–
Conviction– Every day–
That Life like This– Is stopless–
Be Judgment– what it may–

618

At leisure is the Soul
That gets a Staggering Blow—
The Width of Life— before it spreads
Without a thing to do—

It begs you give it Work—
But just the placing Pins—
Or humblest Patchwork— Children do—
To Help its Vacant Hands—

Forever– is composed of Nows–
'Tis not a different time
Except for Infiniteness
And Latitude of Home

From this– experienced Here–
Remove the Dates– to These–
Let Months dissolve in further Months–
And Years– exhale in Years–

Without Debate– or Pause–
Or Celebrated Days–
No different Our Years would be
From Anno Domini's–

You left me— Sire— two Legacies—
A Legacy of Love
A Heavenly Father would suffice
Had He the offer of—

You left me Boundaries of Pain—
Capacious as the Sea—
Between Eternity and Time—
Your Consciousness— and Me—

Behind Me– dips Eternity–
Before Me– Immortality–
Myself– the Term between–
Death but the Drift of Eastern Gray,
Dissolving into Dawn away,
Before the West begin–

'Tis Kingdoms– afterward– they say–
In perfect– pauseless Monarchy–
Whose Prince– is Son of None–
Himself– His Dateless Dynasty–
Himself– Himself diversify–
In Duplicate divine–

'Tis Miracle before Me– then–
'Tis Miracle behind– between–
A Crescent in the Sea–
With Midnight to the North of Her–
And Midnight to the South of Her–
And Maelstrom– in the Sky–

My Life had stood— a Loaded Gun—
In Corners— till a Day
The Owner passed— identified—
And carried Me away—

And now We roam in Sovereign Woods—
And now We hunt the Doe—
And every time I speak for Him—
The Mountains straight reply—

And do I smile, such cordial light
Upon the Valley glow—
It is as a Vesuvian face
Had let its pleasure through—

And when at Night— Our good Day done—
I guard My Master's Head—
'Tis better than the Eider-Duck's
Deep Pillow— to have shared—

To foe of His— I'm deadly foe—
None stir the second time—
On whom I lay a Yellow Eye—
Or an emphatic Thumb—

Though I than He— may longer live
He longer must— than I—
For I have but the power to kill,
Without— the power to die—

764

Presentiment— is that long Shadow— on the Lawn—
Indicative that Suns go down—
The Notice to the startled Grass
That Darkness— is about to pass—

765

You constituted Time—
I deemed Eternity
A Revelation of Yourself—
'Twas therefore Deity—

The Absolute— removed—
The Relative— away—
That I unto Himself adjust
My slow idolatry—

Twice had Summer her fair Verdure
Proffered to the Plain—
Twice a Winter's silver Fracture
On the Rivers been—

Two full Autumns for the Squirrel
Bounteous prepared—
Nature, Had'st thou not a Berry
For thy wandering Bird?

Crisis is a Hair
Toward which the forces creep
Past which forces retrograde
If it come in sleep

To suspend the Breath
Is the most we can
Ignorant is it Life or Death
Nicely balancing

Let an instant push
Or an Atom press
Or a Circle hesitate
In its Circumference

It may jolt the Hand
That adjusts the Hair
That secures Eternity
From presenting— Here

The Admirations– and Contempts– of Time–
Show justest– through an Open Tomb–
The Dying– as it were a Height
Reorganizes Estimate
And what We saw not
We distinguish clear–
And mostly– see not
What We saw before–

'Tis Compound Vision–
Light– enabling Light–
The Finite– furnished
With the Infinite–
Convex– and Concave Witness–
Back– toward Time–
And forward–
Toward the God of Him–

967

Pain— expands the Time—
Ages coil within
The minute Circumference
Of a single Brain—

Pain contracts— the Time—
Occupied with Shot—
Gamuts of Eternities
Are as they were not—

I've dropped my Brain– My Soul is numb–
The Veins that used to run
Stop palsied– 'tis Paralysis
Done perfecter on stone

Vitality is Carved and cool.
My nerve– In Marble lies–
A Breathing Woman
Yesterday– Endowed with Paradise.

Not dumb– I had a sort that moved–
A Sense that smote and stirred–
Instincts for Dance– a caper part–
An Aptitude for Bird–

Who wrought Carrara in me
And chiselled all my tune
Were it a Witchcraft– were it Death–
I've still a chance to strain

To Being, somewhere– Motion– Breath–
Though Centuries beyond,
And every limit a Decade–
I'll shiver, satisfied.

1569

The Clock strikes one that just struck two—
Some schism in the Sum—
A Vagabond for Genesis
Has wrecked the Pendulum—

1774

Too happy Time dissolves itself
And leaves no remnant by—
'Tis Anguish not a Feather hath
Or too much weight to fly—