A Word dropped careless on a Page

POEM TEXT

A Word dropped careless on a Page
May stimulate an eye
When folded in perpetual seam
The Wrinkled Maker lie

Infection in the sentence breeds
We may inhale Despair
At distances of Centuries
From the Malaria—

SUMMARY

A word, casually written down, can affect a reader long after its ancient, wrinkled writer has died.

Emotional disease can live on in a sentence. In reading, we can be infected with a writer's hopelessness even centuries after the writer suffered from that metaphorical malaria of the emotions.

THEMES

THE POWER (AND DANGER) OF THE WRITTEN WORD

Emily Dickinson's "A Word dropped careless on a Page" explores writing's power to survive across "Centuries," moving and influencing people long after a work's author is dead. But where many poems that touch on this theme treat literature's immortality with awed respect (or writerly pride), *this* poem's speaker seems a little unnerved by the ways in which written words might be able to affect people years down the line. Such a power, this poem suggests, has its dangers as well as its beauties.

The speaker begins the poem by reflecting that even a "word dropped careless on a Page"—a word that the original writer hardly thought about—has the power to "stimulate" later readers long after the writer's death. Because paper can outlive people, any and all writing might have the eerie power to stick around and affect people far into the future.

That power, the speaker suggests, can be dangerous. That's because, if writing has the power not just to stick around but also to "stimulate," then it might stimulate dreadful feelings. A sentence describing a terrible "Despair," for instance, might work like a sick body and spread "infection," disease. If a writer describes their misery, their work survives for "Centuries," and new people read it, those readers can *catch* that selfsame despair as if it were "Malaria."

Writing thus has a fearsome power. Not only can it capture and preserve feelings pretty much forever, but it can also *spread* them like a disease—and some of those feelings are not ones people would necessarily want to catch. Where other poets have rejoiced in the idea that poetry might eternally preserve a lover's beauty (and/or a poet's reputation), Dickinson here suggests there's something potentially unsettling about the written word's power to survive. If written language can immortalize and communicate feeling, that means that it might sometimes keep a terrible hurt alive across the years. This poem's speaker seems as fascinated by this power as they're alarmed by it! After all, they're *writing* these reflections.

Where this theme appears in the poem:

- Lines 1-8

LINE-BY-LINE ANALYSIS

LINES 1-2

A Word dropped careless on a Page
May stimulate an eye

Many poets have written about writing's power to outlive its author, and many poets have written about writing's power to eternally preserve what the author describes (such as physical beauty, to take just one favorite theme). In "A Word dropped careless on a Page," Emily Dickinson will make similar points—but in a much eerier and more ambivalent way. Writing's power to survive and to transmit feeling, this poem will suggest, might be dangerous as well as awe-inspiring and beautiful.

The poem begins with the idea that writing has the power to "stimulate an eye" long after its author is dead. That's because the written word is a physical thing. Putting an idea or a feeling into writing makes it into a concrete object rather than an ephemeral experience, allowing it to survive. Even a word "dropped careless on a Page," tossed down as casually as a beach pebble, has this power of endurance.

Perhaps, then, writing has a *disproportionate* power. It's not just timeless sonnets that can live on after the deaths of their authors, here. It's any old bit of writing, no matter how "careless." Make a word into a written word, and it might just

have the chance to "stimulate an eye" somewhere in the far-distant future.

That turn of phrase again suggests there's something very *concrete* going on here. Etymologically, the word "stimulate" has roots in ideas of stinging and prodding; it suggests physical as well as emotional excitement. And it's the reader's physical "eye" that gets stimulated here: the body gets touched before the feelings do!

Writing a word down, in other words, gives it a body, making it into a physical object that can be "dropped." And once it has that body, it can work on the bodies of people who come along much later—and work *through* their bodies, stimulating them physically in order to stimulate them emotionally.

Dickinson will explore the implications of this idea in her most characteristic form: ballad stanzas. That means that the poem:

- Uses four-line stanzas (or quatrains);
- Rhymes ABCB;
- And is written in common measure, a meter that alternates between lines of iambic tetrameter (lines of four iambs, metrical feet with a da-DUM rhythm, as in "A word | dropped care- | less on | a Page") and lines of iambic trimeter (three iambs, as in "May stim- | ulate | an eye").

Here as elsewhere, Dickinson uses this simple, earthy form (familiar from hymns and folk songs) to embody strange, complex, provoking ideas.

LINES 3-4

When folded in perpetual seam
The Wrinkled Maker lie

A piece of writing, the speaker goes on, can keep on "stimulat[ing]" its readers' eyes even after its "Wrinkled Maker," its wrinkly old author, lies "folded in perpetual seam." On the most straightforward level, this description paints a picture of a writer who has gotten very, very old. Their face is "folded in perpetual seam"—permanently and deeply creased. And if they "lie" in this perpetual wrinkliness, they've likely died: they've lived to a ripe old age, their elderly faces are permanently marked, and now they lie in their grave.

At the same time, the particular images the speaker uses here connect this "Maker" to their works:

- This maker isn't just "wrinkled," they're "fold[ed]" and "seam[ed]": words one would use to describe a crumpled piece of paper.
- For that matter, it's possible to interpret these words metaphorically. In this reading, "Wrinkled Maker" is actually *buried in their book*. The words "folded in perpetual seam" might be read to mean that the author is folded up in death the way a pressed flower might be "folded" into the "seam" of a book's binding.
- Either way, there's an intense sense that the person who writes the words down and the physical page they write on are *connected*.

The written word doesn't simply live on past its author, these images imply. Rather, it preserves a little bit of its maker; it *is* a little bit of its maker. The "Wrinkled Maker" here sounds a lot like the thing they've *made*: an old, creased piece of paper marked with feeling.

An enjambment here helps to unfold a complex sentence structure:

When folded in perpetual seam
The Wrinkled Maker lie

In a more ordinary sentence structure, one would be more likely to say something like "When the Wrinkled Maker lies folded in perpetual seam," moving from the subject ("the Wrinkled Maker") to the verb ("lies"). But Dickinson inverts the usual grammatical order here, so that the image of the dead "Wrinkled Maker" only comes at the very end of the sentence (and the stanza). The enjambment carries readers over the line break and toward this surprising final image: the "Wrinkled Maker" gets unveiled only at the end, as if they're squashed between the pages at the very back of a book.

LINES 5-8

Infection in the sentence breeds
We may inhale Despair
At distances of Centuries
From the Malaria—

The second stanza abruptly introduces a new idea. "Infection in the sentence breeds," the speaker declares in one blunt end-stopped line. In other words, a sentence is a breeding ground for disease.

This feels like a pretty startling development on the thoughts of the first stanza. There, the speaker reflected that written words have physical bodies, that they can outlive their makers, and that they nonetheless carry a part of their makers with them. All these ideas are ones that poets have explored in the past, often rejoicing over writing's power to preserve a little bit of the author and their feelings. This speaker, however, takes a different angle. Here, the physical bodies of sentences aren't just gloriously and beautifully immortal, like angels. Rather, they can be immortally infectious, sickly, dangerous.

That's because these sentences might embody terrible things. Even at "distances of Centuries" from a writer, the speaker goes on, it's possible for readers to "inhale Despair" from a sentence expressing that writer's misery. In other words, people can catch a writer's mood of hopelessness as if it were a virus.

Metaphorically, despair becomes a disease here, and a sentence the vector of that disease. Despair comes breathing up from the page like "Malaria."

The word "malaria" literally means "bad air" (as unhealthy air from swamps was once believed to cause that terrible disease). That etymology makes this a particularly potent choice of illness in this context. Again, the speaker is imagining the way written words work in intensely physical terms. The sentence becomes a sick body, and it transmits its sickness to the reader *through the air*, the way much disease travels. Feeling floats from the book to the speaker's "stimulate[d]" eye, crossing the gap between person and page—and it gets "inhale[d]," entering the reader's body. If the written word communicates, it communicates like a communicable disease!

A new intensity in the speaker's language highlights the new intensity in their ideas: powerful assonance and consonance weave the words of this stanza together. For instance, the matching sounds of "sentence breeds" and "Centuries" introduce a slant end rhyme, making the rhyme scheme in this stanza sound more like an ABAB pattern and breaking from the ABCB pattern of the first stanza. These effects help the speaker's voice feel urgent as they explore their uneasy images of contagion.

The poem thus closes with an unusually ambivalent, even sinister vision of the power of the written word. Writing might immortalize not just its "Maker," but its maker's most dreadful feelings—and it might spread those dreadful feelings around.

Reading, in that case, is a dangerous game. Rather than offering immortal consolation or immortal beauty, it might offer a deathless hopelessness. Even a "careless" word can move across "centuries" to poke readers in the eye or float into their lungs. Readers must, therefore, proceed at their own peril.

However, the poem's tone isn't itself despairing; far from it. This speaker's description of the power of embodied words seems potentially as admiring as it is alarmed. Perhaps there's something exciting about getting infected with the feelings of someone long dead, even if those feelings are painful ones. After all, the speaker chooses *to write about* the power of written words. This is a poem that achieves what it describes: the breath of the long-dead "Maker" wafts out of these few short lines.

POETIC DEVICES

METAPHOR

In the poem's first line, the speaker imagines a word as a physical object, something that can be "dropped careless on a Page" like a tossed-aside pebble. This subtle metaphor introduces one of the poem's major ideas: writing transforms thought and feeling into something concrete. A page with words on it is indeed an *object*—and that object can outlast the person who made it. Written words are still there, still able to "stimulate an eye," even when the "Wrinkled Maker" of those words lies in their grave, "folded in perpetual seam" (an image that metaphorically suggests the writer is folded up in the grave the way a pressed flower might be folded between the pages of a book: near the "seam," the line of stitching in the binding).

This fact has its dangers. In the second stanza, the speaker develops an elaborate extended metaphor in which a mood of "Despair," preserved in a "sentence," is a dreadful disease. The sentence, here, becomes a sick body, "infect[ed]" with a despair that might prove contagious to later readers, even "distances of Centuries" from the life of the miserable author.

Written language, these metaphors suggest, can become a super-spreader of infectious feeling. By giving feeling a physical body (and one that can outlive human bodies), writing has the potential to infect readers with a dead person's emotions: sufferings that might otherwise have evaporated long, long ago.

Where Metaphor appears in the poem:

- Line 1
- Lines 3-4
- Lines 5-8

IMAGERY

A moment of imagery in the first stanza gets at the eerie way in which writing preserves something of its writer. Musing on the immortality of the written word, the poem's speaker observes that a piece of writing can go on affecting people long after its "Wrinkled Maker" lies "folded in perpetual seam." This moment metaphorically suggests that the "Wrinkled Maker" is closed up in their grave. But it might also gives the reader an image of the creased face of a writer who, before they died, got very, very old, with their face fallen into "perpetual" (permanent) wrinkles.

The imagery here also subtly connects the writer to their works. The "Wrinkled Maker," in this reading, isn't just wrinkly, but "folded" and "seam[ed]"—terms one might use to describe a piece of crumpled paper.

This image subtly underscores one of the speaker's big ideas: writers' thoughts and emotions outlive them through the strange power of words on paper. The body of the "Wrinkled Maker" has shriveled up and gone, here, but the speaker's description of that vanished body also links it to the medium that captures the maker's words—a medium which allows those words to go on "stimulat[ing]" readers.

Where Imagery appears in the poem:

- **Lines 3-4:** "When folded in perpetual seam / The Wrinkled Maker lie"

ENJAMBMENT

Enjambments help to give this poem a surprising rhythm (and one characteristic of Dickinson's work). The first stanza, for instance, is one long sentence:

> A Word dropped careless on a Page
> May stimulate an eye
> When folded in perpetual seam
> The Wrinkled Maker lie

The enjambments here urge the reader on through a complex idea. A key revelation—that the "Wrinkled Maker" of that carelessly dropped word now lies dead—doesn't arrive until the final line, thanks to an inverted sentence structure:

- In a more typical sentence structure, one would be more likely to say "when the wrinkled maker lies folded in perpetual seam," putting the subject (the "maker") before the verb ("lies").
- Here, Dickinson turns things around so that the key verb—"lie"—only comes at the end of the sentence and the end of the stanza.
- The enjambments here thus "stimulate the eye," keeping the reader moving through the stanza toward its significant conclusion.

In the second stanza, meanwhile, enjambments help to slowly unfold a disturbing thought. The first, end-stopped line here introduces a new idea: "Infection in the sentence breeds." Lines 6-8 explain how:

> We may inhale Despair
> At distances of Centuries
> From the Malaria—

The enjambments here fall in places where one wouldn't normally introduce much of a pause in everyday speech. This choice gives the passage a halting, uneasy rhythm to suit its uneasy ideas.

Where Enjambment appears in the poem:

- **Lines 1-2:** "Page / May"
- **Lines 3-4:** "seam / The"
- **Lines 6-7:** "Despair / At"
- **Lines 7-8:** "Centuries / From"

ASSONANCE

Assonance intensifies the poem's language, particularly in the eerie, sinister second stanza. Echoing vowel sounds (often supported by consonance) run all through this passage. Lines 5-7, for instance, are loaded with assonance:

> Infection in the sentence breeds
> We may inhale Despair

There's a lot going on here:

- The /in/ sound of "infection" meets the /in/ sound of "inhale"
- The /eh/ sound of "infection" meets the /eh/ sounds of "sentence"
- And the /ay/ sound of "may inhale" leads into the broader /a/ sound of "Despair."

These echoes heighten the language of these lines, encouraging readers to prick up their ears as they listen to the speaker's new (and rather disturbing) ideas of emotional contagion.

Assonance (and consonance) even help to form an unexpected slant rhyme between lines 5 and 7:

> Infection in the sentence breeds
> We may inhale Despair
> At distances of Centuries
> From the Malaria—

The echoes between "sentence breeds" and "centuries" change the rhyme scheme from the ABCB of the first stanza to something that sound more like an ABAB. These subtle choices help the second stanza, with its novel and sinister ideas, to sound just that bit more intense than the first.

Where Assonance appears in the poem:

- **Line 5:** "Infection," "sentence," "breeds"
- **Line 6:** "may inhale Despair"
- **Line 7:** "Centuries"

VOCABULARY

Careless (Line 1) - Casually, thoughtlessly.

Stimulate (Line 2) - Excite, interest.

Perpetual seam (Line 3) - Permanent wrinkles. This line might also suggest that the wrinkly old "maker," the author of the words the speaker discusses, is lying dead, buried eternally in the earth like an old pressed flower might be buried in the "seam" of a book's spine.

Infection (Line 5) - Disease. The speaker is using the word metaphorically here to convey writing's potential to breed and spread terrible feelings.

Breeds (Line 5) - Grows, reproduces.

Malaria (Line 8) - An infectious disease whose name literally means "bad air" (as unhealthy air was once believed to be its cause, though in fact, it's a parasitic disease carried by

mosquitoes). The speaker here uses malaria metaphorically to suggest painful feelings captured in writing, which can "infect" people long after the writer who felt those feelings is gone.

FORM, METER, & RHYME

FORM

Here as in much of her poetry, Dickinson communicates deep thought in a simple form. "A Word dropped careless on a Page" is written in two ballad stanzas: that is, quatrains (four-line stanzas) rhymed ABCB and written in common measure. In other words, this poem uses exactly the same form as a folk song or a hymn.

This was the form that Dickinson turned to most often. Influenced by other writers of the Romantic era (notably the earlier poet William Wordsworth), Dickinson chose to use unpretentious, earthy poetic structures to embody immense ideas.

In this poem, down-to-earth ballad stanzas might even help to prove the speaker's point. Describing the effect that a "Word dropped careless on a Page" can have across time and space, Dickinson uses a deceptively simple, apparently "careless" form. And just as her speaker describes, here readers are, having their eyes "stimulate[d]" across "distances of Centuries" by these very words. (Dickinson's obsession with this form, of course, reveals that these effects are far from careless!)

METER

"A Word dropped careless on a Page" is written in the meter Dickinson turned to most often in her poetry: common measure (also known as ballad meter). Common measure uses alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter. In other words, the stanzas go back and forth between lines that use four iambs—metrical feet with a da-DUM rhythm, as in "A Word"—and lines that use three iambs. Here's how that sounds in lines 5-6:

> In fect- | ion in | the sen- | tence breeds
> We may | in hale | De spair

Dickinson wrote the vast majority of her work in this meter; it's one of her trademarks. Here as elsewhere in her poetry, she uses the simple, earthy rhythm of common measure (which often appears in folk songs and hymns) to give shape to complex and sometimes disturbing ideas. It's like plain brown wrapping paper on a box with a bomb inside.

RHYME SCHEME

Like many of Dickinson's poems, "A Word dropped careless on a Page" uses the traditional rhyme scheme of a ballad stanza, which runs like this:

ABCB

Dickinson used this familiar pattern more often than not. Here, her simple rhymes wrap around complex, disquieting thoughts.

However, she toys with her rhymes a little in the second stanza:

- The B rhymes in lines 6 and 8 ("Despair" and "Malaria") are slant rather than perfect.
- What's more, there's an unexpected slant rhyme between lines 5 and 7, thanks to their assonance and consonance: /sen/ and /ree/ sounds link "sentence breeds" and "Centuries."
- The stanza thus feels more like it rhymes ABAB than ABCB!

These choices make the second stanza sound more intense than the first, and that feels fitting. With its musings on centuries-old "Despair" breeding like germs in ancient sentences, ready to float out and "infect[]" new readers, the end of the poem strikes a more dangerous and uneasy note than the beginning.

SPEAKER

Readers learn little about this poem's speaker. As in much of Dickinson's verse, what the speaker observes is more important than who they are. Still, readers might get the sense that this speaker is a little uneasy about how powerful the written word can be. Poets often love writing about how words live forever and can "stimulate an eye" centuries down the line. Less frequently do they observe that this power might have dangerous effects as well as lovely ones. This speaker knows very well that it's not just, say, the beauty of a beloved (or the brilliance of a poet) that might endure across the years through writing, but a "Despair" as infectious as "Malaria." Written language, they observe, might thus become a destroyer as much as a preserver.

Perhaps readers might imagine some of these feelings are Dickinson's own. A sensitive and responsive reader, Dickinson once said of her experience of poetry:

> If I read a book [and] it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only way I know it. Is there any other way.

Another writer's despair might well get in through the top of a head opened so.

SETTING

There's no specific setting in this poem: it could take place any time since the invention of writing, anywhere in the world. This timelessness and placelessness is part of Dickinson's point. Words "dropped careless on a Page" centuries ago, this poem's speaker observes, have the ability to "stimulate an eye" right across the gulf of the years. Time doesn't matter to books. As long as someone's around who can read the language a book (or a poem, or a letter, or a grocery list) is written in, its words can still move them, excite them—or perhaps even "infect[]" them with dreadful feelings.

In this speaker's vision, the timeless power of the written word is perilous as well as beautiful. The second stanza imagines "Despair" as a contagious disease living in the metaphorical body of a sentence. Such disease doesn't die out: it can escape and infect an unwary reader centuries after that hopeless sentence was written. (Readers might also be interested in taking a look at John Donne's similar thoughts—from a couple of centuries before Dickinson—about the perils of giving feelings a body in written language.)

This very poem's survival proves this point: these words communicate sheer, fascinated *unease* nearly 200 years down the line from their composition.

CONTEXT

LITERARY CONTEXT

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) published almost nothing during her lifetime, and after 1865 she rarely even left her family home in Amherst, Massachusetts. But from within her circumscribed world, she explored the heights and depths of human experience through her groundbreaking, world-changing poetry.

No one else sounds quite like Dickinson. Her poems use simple, folky forms—ballad stanzas, for instance—to explore profound philosophical questions, passionate loves, and the mysteries of nature. Her characteristic dashes make many of her lines seem to hold their breath in awe or in pain.

While Dickinson didn't get too involved in the literary world of her time, she was still part of a swell of 19th-century American innovation. Her contemporary Walt Whitman (who became as famous as Dickinson was obscure) was similarly developing an unprecedented and unique poetic voice, and the Transcendentalists (like Emerson and Thoreau) shared her deep belief in the spiritual power of nature. Dickinson herself was inspired by English writers like William Wordsworth and Charlotte Brontë, whose works similarly found paths through the everyday world into the sublime, terrifying, and astonishing.

After Dickinson died, her sister Lavinia discovered a trunk of nearly 1,800 secret poems squirreled away in a bedroom, and with the (sometimes fraught) help of a circle of family and friends, she began to publish Dickinson's work. It wasn't long before Dickinson's poetry was internationally famous and beloved. Nonetheless, it took years for all of her poems to see print. This poem is one of those that was not collected until scholar Thomas H. Johnson produced an edition of her complete works, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, in 1955.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Emily Dickinson's passionate personality and volcanic intellect wouldn't have been too comfortable for many of the people around her in 19th-century rural Massachusetts. In that respectable, conventional time and place, women weren't expected to be geniuses.

The 19th century in general was a pretty tough time to be a woman writer. Dickinson's hero Charlotte Brontë was only one of the great 19th-century women writers who published under a male or ambiguous pen name ("Currer Bell," in Brontë's case)—and many of those writers, like George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans) and George Sand (Amantine Dupin), are still better known by their pseudonyms today.

To the reclusive Dickinson, poetry was a channel: a way of traveling beyond the confines of her situation and fully expressing her wild inner world, without drawing the unwanted attention of the neighbors. This poem's sense of the potentially dangerous power of language reflects her awareness that, in her poetry, she was playing with fire—with awe, glee, fear, and force all at her command.

This poem might also hit particularly hard considering how little of Dickinson's verse was published in her lifetime. Her works nonetheless live on and do exactly what this poem's speaker describes, breathing their influence over readers "at distances of Centuries."

MORE RESOURCES

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- The Poem in Manuscript — See Dickinson's manuscript of this poem (including some of her thoughts about possible alternative word choices). (https://www.edickinson.org/editions/1/image_sets/12177298)
- The Emily Dickinson Museum — Visit the website of the Emily Dickinson Museum to find a wealth of information about Dickinson's life and work. (https://www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org/)
- A Short Biography — Read the Poetry Foundation's overview of Dickinson's life. (https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/emily-dickinson)

- A Portrait of Dickinson — Take a look at a famous daguerrotype of Dickinson as a young woman—the only fully authenticated image of her to survive. (https://www.amherst.edu/library/archives/holdings/edickinson/dickinsondag)
- Dickinson's Legacy — Read novelist Helen Oyeyemi's reflections on what Dickinson means to her. (https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/jun/04/emily-dickinson-hero-helen-oyeyemi)

LITCHARTS ON OTHER EMILY DICKINSON POEMS

- A Bird, came down the Walk
- After great pain, a formal feeling comes –
- A Light exists in Spring
- A Murmur in the Trees—to note—
- A narrow Fellow in the Grass
- An awful Tempest mashed the air—
- As imperceptibly as grief
- A still—Volcano—Life—
- Because I could not stop for Death —
- Before I got my eye put out
- Fame is a fickle food
- Hope is the thing with feathers
- I cannot live with You –
- I cautious, scanned my little life
- I could bring You Jewels—had I a mind to—
- I did not reach Thee
- I died for Beauty—but was scarce
- I dreaded that first Robin, so
- I dwell in Possibility –
- I felt a Funeral, in my Brain
- If I can stop one heart from breaking
- I had been hungry, all the Years
- I have a Bird in spring
- I heard a Fly buzz - when I died -
- I like a look of Agony
- I like to see it lap the Miles
- I measure every Grief I meet
- I'm Nobody! Who are you?
- I started Early — Took my Dog —
- I taste a liquor never brewed
- It was not Death, for I stood up
- I—Years—had been—from Home—
- Like Rain it sounded till it curved
- Much Madness is divinest Sense -
- My Life had stood - a Loaded Gun
- Nature is what we see
- One need not be a Chamber — to be Haunted
- Publication — is the Auction
- Safe in their Alabaster Chambers
- Shipwreck
- Success is counted sweetest
- Tell all the truth but tell it slant —
- The Brain—is wider than the Sky—
- The Bustle in a House
- The Mushroom is the Elf of Plants
- There came a Wind like a Bugle
- There is no Frigate like a Book
- There's a certain Slant of light
- There's been a Death, in the Opposite House
- The saddest noise, the sweetest noise
- The Sky is low — the Clouds are mean
- The Soul has bandaged moments
- The Soul selects her own Society
- The Wind – tapped like a tired Man –
- They shut me up in Prose –
- This is my letter to the world
- This World is not Conclusion
- 'Twas the old—road—through pain—
- We grow accustomed to the Dark
- What mystery pervades a well!
- Whose cheek is this?
- Wild nights - Wild nights!

HOW TO CITE

MLA

Nelson, Kristin. "*A Word dropped careless on a Page.*" *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 21 Aug 2024. Web. 23 Aug 2024.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Nelson, Kristin. "*A Word dropped careless on a Page.*" LitCharts LLC, August 21, 2024. Retrieved August 23, 2024. https://www.litcharts.com/poetry/emily-dickinson/a-word-dropped-careless-on-a-page.