

Knows How to Forget!

--Emily Dickinson - 1830-1886

In Dickinson's "Knows How to Forget" there appears to have different interpretations. One of which may be the hidden theme of death. A very hard thing for example you want to forget may, perhaps, be someone whom you had loved most, is lost now forever. There is no way of knowing the tricks to forgetting. In the poem, the poet questions many different sources about the knowledge of forgetting but there is no answer. When someone is lost, he or she is lost forever, and forgetting him is almost impossible. Nor there are any guidelines for a person to forget something unlikely, which you want to forget, has happened, especially death.

The second line of the first stanza has an "It" which may, perhaps, refer to a school of thought which, according to the poet, seemingly does know the ways and means to possess the knowledge of forgetting. Yet, it is uncertain if it could teach that art to others and even the philosopher's teaching, who would have thought that becoming an erudite scholar, is the end of his quest and nothing more, is equally fruitless. Neither the knowledge imparted by the school, nor the acquired global wisdom seem to come for the rescue of the poet. Had it been found implied in the book, the poet says that she could buy, as it is well known that institutionalized knowledge is nothing but a mere humbug.

The poet further goes on to muse that such an inevitable skill or knowledge happened to be found like Planet, she would have known of the same by means of a Telescope. Even if it has been an invention with patent, the poet is ready to pay for it but he could not. In the end she seems to be even questioning the Almighty but in vain.

Dickinson's tone here is very skeptical. She mocks at the very idea that forgetting might be the easiest of all arts as it is believed universally but those depressed and dull with unhappiness have fatally paid despite the acquisition of it. . In the meantime, the poet will have to discover on her own, how one is able to forget. Hopefully, she thinks that she won't become another sacrifice for science.
