

A Brighter Garden

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An illustrated collection of poems by the famous nineteenth-century poet. No better combination of artist and poet can celebrate nature more aptly than Emily Dickinson and Tasha Tudor. Ackerman has selected 23 of Dickinson's works from the almost 2,000 that have been published in order to share Dickinson's love of nature with today's children. However, 14 of these poems are excerpts. A note explains that this was done "particularly with children in mind," but her reasoning is unclear. If her concern is children's inability to understand the entire poem, it seems more unlikely that they will understand the incomplete thoughts caused by the omissions. The book is divided by seasons; within these sections, the poems celebrate different moments of the day. Each poem, whether segment or entire poem, appears on one page, opposite one of Tudor's impressionistic paintings set in an oval that captures the spirit of the poem but does not overwhelm it. *I'm Nobody! Who Are You? Poems of Emily Dickinson for Children* (Stemmer House, 1978) is a collection in which the artwork dominates and at times overwhelms the poetry. Ackerman's collection is very clear in its focus on the cycle of nature and the day within it. *A Letter to the World* (Macmillan, 1968; o.p.), compiled by Rumer Godden, is a straightforward collection of 44 of Dickinson's poems on a wide range of subjects; it lacks the special feeling that has been created by bringing Dickinson and Tudor together in Ackerman's book. Had each of these poems appeared in its entirety, the celebration would not only have been unique but also complete. -- Jane Marino, White Plains Public Library, NY

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