

# And Past My Bodice, Too

*"And past my Bodice-too."*

EMILY DICKINSON

Hands, bustling, and mind alert  
in the early-morning fog of the next day,  
constructing a state of mind consistent  
with my duties at the word-machine: language,  
living in my kitchen and my living room, dying  
for exposure in dreams of the silvery night.  
I too heard a fly buzz, but I did not die.  
I must fix the fish and witness more light  
fading away to Southern California, I must imagine  
dark ships brooding off the coast of Leucadia,  
their tranquil moorings riveted to the sea.  
No earthly storm can move them  
without permission.  
Of course an astronomer's at my elbow,  
piercing the silence at times, announcing change.  
Today my bodice is blue, who knows tomorrow?  
Later, after the last nightingale has fluttered by,  
I'll close my temporary office for the duration,  
write Anne & Emily & Sylvia, and say goodnight.  
Then I'll ponder on the sum of all things,  
about the fruit of my labor and the tokens I've earned.  
Perhaps peace will come to the Ouachita Valley  
and a superior sun will rise tomorrow over  
the marginal farmland of Farmerville  
and further Eastward over  
most of Union Parish.

ERROL MILLER