

# Fatal Interview: Exploring the Intricacies of Identity, Loneliness, and Desire in Edna St. Vincent Millay's Sonnets

Edna St. Vincent Millay's sonnets from *Fatal Interview* are a powerful and moving examination of the complexities of identity, loneliness, and desire. Millay, a pioneering modernist poet known for her bold and unconventional style, delves into the depths of these themes through the lens of her own experiences and the societal context of her time.



## Fatal Interview: Sonnets by Edna St. Vincent Millay

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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|----------------------|-------------|
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| Screen Reader        | : Supported |
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| Print length         | : 59 pages  |



## The Search for Identity

Throughout the sonnets, Millay grapples with questions of identity and self-discovery. She explores the tension between her authentic self and the persona she presents to the world, particularly in the context of societal expectations and gender roles.

In "Sonnet XXVII," Millay writes:



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***“I do not like my body. When it moves,***

***I do not like the way my body moves.***

***It is not lithe or graceful as other girls'***

***Whose bodies I have watched, whom I have seen***

***Move lightly through the world without my pain.”***

This sonnet reveals Millay's dissatisfaction with her physical form and her longing to conform to societal standards of beauty and grace. She feels alienated from her body and experiences a sense of inadequacy.

However, as the sonnets progress, Millay begins to embrace her own unique identity, rejecting societal norms and expectations. In "Sonnet LII," she declares:

““

***“I am not yours; not lost in you, not lost***

***Although I have been ravaged by your heat;***

***Not yours to hold, or hers to have enclosed***

***Though you may take my body for your guest.”***

This sonnet asserts Millay's autonomy and her refusal to be defined by others. She recognizes that her body is her own and that she has the right to love and be loved on her own terms.

## **The Torment of Loneliness**

Loneliness permeates the sonnets of *Fatal Interview*. Millay expresses a profound sense of isolation and longing for connection, often contrasting her own experiences with those of others who appear to have found happiness and fulfillment.

In "Sonnet II," she writes:



***“I have no wit, I have no words, I have***

***No wholesome heart to give you for your own;***

***I have no way to love you, none, and yet***

***I will do all I can.”***

This sonnet reveals Millay's vulnerability and her desire for love and companionship. She acknowledges her own shortcomings but expresses a willingness to do whatever it takes to connect with another person.

In "Sonnet XXI," Millay paints a vivid picture of her loneliness:



***“Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare.***

***Let all who prate of Beauty hold their peace,***

***And lay them prone upon the earth and cease***

***To ponder on themselves, the while they stare***

***At nothing, into nothing, into space.”***

This sonnet suggests that true beauty is elusive and inaccessible to most people, leaving them with a sense of emptiness and longing.

### **The Yearning for Desire**

Desire is a powerful force that drives the sonnets of *Fatal Interview*. Millay explores the complexities of desire, from the passionate and consuming to the unfulfilled and bittersweet.

In "Sonnet XVI," she writes:

“

***“My heart is shaken by your glance, and yet***

***I can not love you. I can scarcely say***

***Why it is so, nor for what evil fet***

***I am thus bound, nor how I came astray.”***

This sonnet reveals Millay's struggle to reconcile her desire for a person with her inability to fully commit to a relationship.

In "Sonnet LXIV," Millay explores the bittersweet nature of unfulfilled desire:



***“What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why,  
I have forgotten, and what arms have lain  
Under my head till morning—but the rain  
Is full of ghosts tonight, that tap and sigh  
Upon the glass and listen for reply,”***

This sonnet evokes a sense of melancholic longing, as Millay remembers past relationships that have faded into memory.

The sonnets of Edna St. Vincent Millay's *Fatal Interview* offer a deeply introspective and resonant exploration of the complexities of identity, loneliness, and desire. Through her powerful and evocative language, Millay illuminates the human experience with an unflinching honesty and an undeniable emotional depth. Her sonnets continue to resonate with readers today, offering a timeless and profound reflection on the universal human condition.

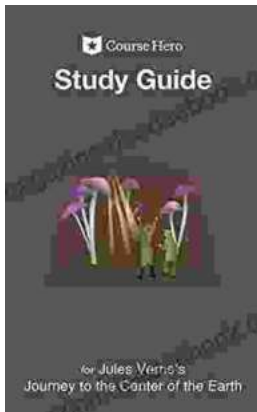
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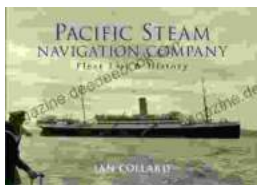


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