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The Lonely House

Emily Dickinson

I KNOW some lonely houses off the road
A robber 'd like the look of,—
Wooden barred,
And windows hanging low,
Inviting to
A portico,
Where two could creep:
One hand the tools,
The other peep
To make sure all 's asleep.
Old fashioned eyes,
Not easy to surprise!

How orderly the kitchen 'd look by night,
With just a clock,—
But they could gag the tick,
And mice won't bark;
And so the walls don't tell,
None will.

A pair of spectacles afar just stir—
An almanac 's aware.
Was it the mat winked,
Or a nervous star?
The moon slides down the stair
To see who 's there.

There 's plunder,—where?
Tankard, or spoon,
Earring, or stone,
A watch, some ancient brooch
To match the grandmamma,
Staid sleeping there.

Day rattles, too,
Stealth 's slow;
The sun has got as far

As the third sycamore.
Screams chanticleer,
"Who 's there?"
And echoes, trains away,
Sneer—"Where?"
While the old couple, just astir,
Fancy the sunrise left the door ajar!



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