

Grief in Diptych: A Golden Shovel after Emily Dickinson

By Emma Berver – Arlington, Virginia

This golden shovel uses the line “I measure every grief I meet” from the poem with the same name by Emily Dickinson. Each line ends with a word in this phrase.

my chest, flung open like a locket, thrums and I
feel you — still beating like hummingbird wings. each measure
I take to quiet you breathes weightlessly, a hollow bone. every
pang comes to me as a diptych, a two-fold grief:
the birds, perching hungrily on empty feeders, while I
deal double solitaire out of habit, the card’s edges refusing to meet.