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## "I felt a funeral, in my Brain." Writing pain: Emily Dickinson and Halina Poświatowska

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**Summary/Abstract:** My paper examines similarities between Emily Dickinson's and Halina Poświatowska's poetic representations of mental processes connected with illness and suffering. As they both struggled with physical or mental illnesses, that is Dickinson's eye problems, agoraphobia or epilepsy and Poświatowska's serious heart disease, their poems are riddled with the themes of illness, suffering and death. Their striking metaphors explore the brain function and its disintegration, for example, in poems such as: "I felt a funeral, in my Brain," "I felt a Cleaving in my Mind / As if my Brain had split -" and "My Brain - begun to laugh -" (Dickinson's J280, J937, J410) or "brain - a metal box / wound up every day / with the silver key of illusion" and "my house is now filled with pitfalls / better stay away from my house / my lips are there red as

memory / and my arms – animals with spry fur [...] and the whole room is chilled with fear / and dark with desire” (Poświatowska’s translations, Indeed I love, 187, 198). Brain, mind and body depicted in their poems have qualities of a container, a room or a house. The speaker becomes a prisoner haunted by her own thoughts and feelings.

## Details

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