

Jacqueline Jules

My Biography

The Childhood of Famous Americans
occupied two shelves in the local library.

Taking them home, one after another, I sat
for hours in a wicker chair on the back porch
feeding a ten-year-old lust to discover
how my life could end up in a book,
just like Amelia Earhart, Clara Barton,
Eleanor Roosevelt, and Molly Pitcher.

In my teens, I remember being sad
for the reclusive Emily Dickinson
who spent her life as a Nobody,
never finding one morsel of fame,
a food she belittled as fickle.

It seemed so unfair to die,
not knowing people still quote
your words, imagine your heartache,
wish they could have tea in your parlor.

Now in my sixties, I reconsider,
wondering how my life would read,
reconstructed from research.

Letters and diaries examined.
Friends and family interviewed.

*Why did she remarry so soon?
Or visit the cemetery so often?*

And I sympathize again with Dickinson
who deemed it dreary to be Somebody
and stand on a lily pad in the center of the pond,
scrutinized by bulging eyes.

Jacqueline Jules is the author of three chapbooks including *Itzhak Perlman's Broken String*, winner of the 2016 Helen Kay Chapbook Prize from Evening Street Press. Her work has appeared in over 100 publications including *Lowestoft Chronicle*, *The Paterson Literary Review*, *Cider Press Review*, *Potomac Review*, *Inkwell*, *Hospital Drive*, and *Imitation Fruit*. Visit her online at <https://metaphoricaltruths.blogspot.com/>