

# Lights and Shadows

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## Reworded Reply

Emily Edwards

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### REWORDED REPLY

“Why do you sit by your shallow rivers  
All your whole life long?  
Why contemplate the stagnant waters?  
Why sit here all alone?”

“Get up and hear the professor’s words  
His wisdom rumbling deep;  
Get up! get up! there are books to read  
And write, and appointments  
You must keep!”

And I replied as William did  
An age and a half ago  
To the voices that did prick my ear,  
And accuse me so.

“You need not shove book and pen at me,  
Nor point an accusing finger;  
For it is only in passive wisdom  
That by the water I still linger.

I am gathering still  
I must feel before I cry;  
So I seek by the water hushed  
As it slowly surges by.

My books shall sleep upon the shelf,  
Or for others they might be singing,  
But I shall stay by stagnant waters  
And silently I shall be dreaming

While all around the professors talk,  
And young pens make reply,  
I shall sit in passive wisdom,  
And dream until I die.”

—Emily Edwards