

Who Are You?

LUANNE BETHKE REDMOND

Chicago, Illinois

I hear such different accounts of you
As puzzle me exceedingly, and tantalize
And frustrate me in trying to discover
Who you really are.

Are you the gentle, kind aunt?
Or the shrewish maiden relative?
Your letters, alternately warm and biting,
Help me little, showing both
And something more—
Sadness with spirit,
Love and disillusion,
Pain
And, sometimes, hope.

Were you happy?

You wrote of love, but did you know it?
Did you crave, or fear it?
The gentle manners hide the truth.

The few pictures are apocryphal—
Uncertain in origin, perhaps not you at all.
But the sweet face gives me a window,
Helps me imagine you dancing and
laughing,
Writing and dreaming.

I know you're not at Westminster.
You're here, and real.
But who?