

Stanzas in Meditation: Stanza 83

By Gertrude Stein

Why am I if I am uncertain reasons may inclose.
Remain remain propose repose chose.
I call carelessly that the door is open
Which if they may refuse to open
No one can rush to close.
Let them be mine therefor.
Everybody knows that I chose.
Therefor if therefore before I close.
I will therefore offer therefore I offer this.
Which if I refuse to miss may be miss is mine.
I will be well welcome when I come.
Because I am coming.
Certainly I come having come.

These stanzas are done.

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Source: *Stanzas in Meditation and Other Poems* (Sun & Moon Press, 1994)



More famous while alive for her outlandish personality and the artistic salon she hosted in Paris than for her writing, Gertrude Stein is now regarded as one of modern literature's most influential experimentalists. (Ironically, her best-known book, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933), is her most traditional.) Among the innovations she hoped would refresh language and draw attention to its potential as music are the multiple repetition with slight variations of short, seemingly nonsensical sentences and the generation of meaning from mosaics of suggestive imagery.