

Bronte by Polly Teale

Anne:

Send a letter to your publisher. Tell him that in the light of recent events you have decided to renounce your ambitions. You intend to throw your pen into the fire and your ink down the grate. Henceforth you will lead a life of honest hard work and practicality.

Do you ever wonder what our lives would have been like had we never put pen to paper? Had we never been afflicted by that curious condition which must have you turn life into words. Yesterday, coming back from Keighley through the wood, I was looking at the tress, at the autumn light, and trying to describe it, for its autumn in my story, when I came across the blackberry pickers. They sang as they worked. There's not a soul amongst them that can read or write and yet I thought I would give anything to be one of them, to be part of that great thrum of life and activity. To see the fruit of your labours in front of you at the end of the day and to know that it will be of use to others. They stopped when they saw me watching. They took off their hats and nodded and I knew that they wanted me gone. It was not a performance. The singing was not for me or for anyone else. It was for its own sake. Like breathing, they did it without knowing. They didn't need anyone to hear. (Pause) why do we need anyone to hear us? Why is it not enough to be? Why us? Why always? As far back as I can remember?

I used to think that we could change things. That by telling the truth we could make a better world.

There are people living in poverty, terrible injustice and suffering and we... we write.