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Elvis Presley and Emily Dickinson in Heaven

By Hans Ostrom

They call each other E. Elvis picks
wildflowers near the river and brings
them to Emily. She explains half-rhymes to him.

In heaven Emily wears her hair long, sports
Levis and western blouses with rhinestones.
Elvis is lean again, wears baggy trousers

and T-shirts, a letterman's jacket from Tupelo High.
They take long walks and often hold hands.
She prefers they remain just friends. Forever.

Emily's poems now contain naugahyde, Cadillacs,
electricity, jets, TV, Little Richard and Richard Nixon.
The rock-a-billy rhythm makes her smile.

Elvis likes himself with style. This afternoon
he will play guitar and sing "I Taste a Liquor
Never Brewed" to the tune of "Love Me Tender."

Emily will clap and harmonize. Alone
in their cabins later, they'll listen to the river
and nap. They will not think of Amherst

or Las Vegas. They know why God made them roommates.

It's because America was their hometown.

It's because God is a thing without feathers.

It's because God wears blue suede shoes.