

### **Abou Ben Adhem James Henry Leigh Hunt**

ABOU BEN ADHEM (may his tribe increase!)  
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
And saw—within the moonlight in his room,  
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom—  
An angel, writing in a book of gold.  
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
And to the presence in the room he said,  
'What writest thou?'—The vision raised its head,  
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,  
Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'  
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'  
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,  
But cheerily still, and said, 'I pray thee, then,  
Write me as one that loves his fellow men.'

The angel wrote and vanished. The next night  
It came again with a great wakening light,  
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,  
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

### **The Artilleryman's Vision Walt Whitman**

WHILE my wife at my side lies slumbering, and the wars are over long,  
And my head on the pillow rests at home, and the vacant midnight passes,  
And through the stillness, through the dark, I hear, just hear, the breath of my infant,  
There in the room, as I wake from sleep, this vision presses upon me:  
The engagement opens there and then, in fantasy unreal;  
The skirmishers begin—they crawl cautiously ahead—I hear the irregular snap! snap!  
I hear the sounds of the different missiles—the short *t-h-t!* *t-h-t!* of the rifle balls;  
I see the shells exploding, leaving small white clouds—I hear the great shells shrieking as they pass;  
The grape, like the hum and whirr of wind through the trees, (quick, tumultuous, now the contest rages!)  
All the scenes at the batteries themselves rise in detail before me again;  
The crashing and smoking—the pride of the men in their pieces;  
The chief gunner ranges and sights his piece, and selects a fuse of the right time;  
After firing, I see him lean aside, and look eagerly off to note the effect;  
—Elsewhere I hear the cry of a regiment charging—(the young colonel leads himself this time, with  
brandish'd sword;)  
I see the gaps cut by the enemy's volleys, (quickly fill'd up, no delay;)  
I breathe the suffocating smoke—then the flat clouds hover low, concealing all;  
Now a strange lull comes for a few seconds, not a shot fired on either side;  
Then resumed, the chaos louder than ever, with eager calls, and orders of officers;  
While from some distant part of the field the wind wafts to my ears a shout of applause, (some special  
success;)  
And ever the sound of the cannon, far or near, (rousing, even in dreams, a devilish exultation, and all  
the old mad joy, in the depths of my soul;)  
And ever the hastening of infantry shifting positions—batteries, cavalry, moving hither and thither;  
(The falling, dying, I heed not—the wounded, dripping and red, I heed not—some to the rear are  
hobbling;)  
Grime, heat, rush—aid-de-camps galloping by, or on a full run;  
With the patter of small arms, the warning *s-s-t* of the rifles, (these in my vision I hear or see,)  
And bombs busting in air, and at night the vari-color'd rockets.

### **As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame Gerard Manley Hopkins**

AS kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;  
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells  
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's  
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;  
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:  
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves—goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,

Crying *Whát I do is me: for that I came.*

Í say móre: the just man justices;  
Kéeps gráce: thát keeps all his goings graces;  
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is—  
Christ—for Christ plays in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

### **Emily Dickinson**

BECAUSE I could not stop for Death,  
He kindly stopped for me;  
The carriage held but just ourselves  
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,  
And I had put away  
My labour, and my leisure too,  
For his civility.

We passed the school where children played  
At wrestling in a ring;  
We passed the fields of gazing grain,  
We passed the setting sun.

We paused before a house that seemed  
A swelling of the ground;  
The roof was scarcely visible,  
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 't is centuries; but each  
Feels shorter than the day  
I first surmised the horses' heads  
Were toward eternity.

### **Felicia Hemans Casabianca**

*[In the battle of the Nile, thirteen-year-old Casabianca, son of the Admiral of the Orient, remained at his post after the ship had taken fire and all the guns had been abandoned. He perished when the vessel exploded.]*

THE boy stood on the burning deck,  
Whence all but he had fled;  
The flame that lit the battle's wreck,  
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,  
As born to rule the storm;  
A creature of heroic blood,  
A proud though childlike form.

The flames rolled on; he would not go  
Without his father's word;  
That father, faint in death below,  
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud, ``Say, Father, say,  
If yet my task is done!"  
He knew not that the chieftain lay  
Unconscious of his son.

“Speak, Father!” once again he cried,  
“If I may yet be gone!”  
--And but the booming shots replied,  
And fast the flames rolled on on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,  
And in his waving hair;  
And looked from that lone post of death  
In still yet brave despair;

And shouted but once more aloud,  
“My Father! must I stay?”  
While o’er him fast, through sail and shroud,  
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapt the ship in splendor wild,  
They caught the flag on high,  
And streamed above the gallant child,  
Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder sound;  
The boy--Oh! where was *he*?  
--Ask of the winds, that far around  
With fragments strewed the sea;--

With shroud, and mast, and pennon fair,  
That well had borne their part,--  
But the noblest thing that perished there  
Was that young, faithful heart.

### **Longfellow Christmas Bells**

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
    And wild and sweet  
    The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
    Had rolled along  
    The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
    A voice, a chime,  
    A chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth  
The cannon thundered in the South,  
    And with the sound  
    The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent  
The hearth-stones of a continent,  
    And made forlorn  
    The households born  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said:  
    "For hate is strong,  
    And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!  
    The Wrong shall fail,  
    The Right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men!"

### **Wordsworth Daffodils**

I WANDER'D lonely as a cloud  
    That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
    A host of golden daffodils,  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
    And twinkle on the Milky Way,  
They stretch'd in never-ending line  
    Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
    Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:—  
A poet could not but be gay  
    In such a jocund company!  
I gazed, and gazed, but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
    In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
    Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

### **Robert Graves A Dead Boche**

TO you who'd read my songs of War  
    And only hear of blood and fame,  
I'll say (you've heard it said before)  
    "War's Hell!" and if you doubt the same,  
Today I found in Mametz Wood  
A certain cure for lust of blood:

Where, propped against a shattered trunk,  
    In a great mess of things unclean,  
Sat a dead Boche; he scowled and stunk  
    With clothes and face a sodden green,  
Big-bellied, spectacled, crop-haired,  
Dribbling black blood from nose and beard.

### **Matthew Arnold Dover Beach**

THE SEA is calm to-night.  
The tide is full, the moon lies fair  
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light  
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,

Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.  
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!  
Only, from the long line of spray  
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd sand,  
Listen! you hear the grating roar  
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,  
At their return, up the high strand,  
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,  
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring  
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago  
Heard it on the Ægæan, and it brought  
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow  
Of human misery; we  
Find also in the sound a thought,  
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith  
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore  
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.  
But now I only hear  
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,  
Retreating, to the breath  
Of the night-winds, down the vast edges drear  
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true  
To one another! for the world, which seems  
To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
So various, so beautiful, so new,  
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
And we are here as on a darkling plain  
Swept with confus'd alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

#### **Wilfred Owen Dulce et Decorum est**

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame, all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys! -- An ecstasy of fumbling  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime. --  
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin,  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood

Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs  
Bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues, --  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.

### **Edgar Allen Poe For Annie**

THANK Heaven! the crisis—  
The danger is past,  
And the lingering illness  
Is over at last—  
And the fever called 'Living'  
Is conquer'd at last.

Sadly, I know  
I am shorn of my strength,  
And no muscle I move  
As I lie at full length:  
But no matter—I feel  
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly  
Now, in my bed,  
That any beholder  
Might fancy me dead—  
Might start at beholding me,  
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,  
The sighing and sobbing,  
Are quieted now,  
With that horrible throbbing  
At heart—ah, that horrible,  
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—  
The pitiless pain—  
Have ceased, with the fever  
That madden'd my brain—  
With the fever called 'Living'  
That burn'd in my brain.

And O! of all tortures  
That torture the worst  
Has abated—the terrible  
Torture of thirst  
For the naphthaline river  
Of Passion accurst—

I have drunk of a water  
That quenches all thirst.  
—Of a water that flows,  
With a lullaby sound,  
From a spring but a very few  
Feet under ground—  
From a cavern not very far  
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never  
Be foolishly said  
That my room it is gloomy,

And narrow my bed;  
For man never slept  
In a different bed—  
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber  
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit  
Here blandly reposes,  
Forgetting, or never  
Regretting its roses—  
Its old agitations  
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly  
Lying, it fancies  
A holier odour  
About it, of pansies—  
A rosemary odour,  
Commingled with pansies—  
With rue and the beautiful  
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,  
Bathing in many  
A dream of the truth  
And the beauty of Annie—  
Drown'd in a bath  
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kiss'd me,  
She fondly caress'd,  
And then I fell gently  
To sleep on her breast—  
Deeply to sleep  
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguish'd,  
She cover'd me warm,  
And she pray'd to the angels  
To keep me from harm—  
To the queen of the angels  
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,  
Now, in my bed  
(Knowing her love),  
That you fancy me dead—  
And I rest so contentedly,  
Now, in my bed  
(With her love at my breast),  
That you fancy me dead—  
That you shudder to look at me,  
Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter  
Than all of the many  
Stars in the sky,  
For it sparkles with Annie—  
It glows with the light  
Of the love of my Annie—  
With the thought of the light  
Of the eyes of my Annie.

**H**  
**ilda Doolittle Heat**

O WIND, rend open the heat,  
Cut apart the heat,  
Rend it to tatters.

Fruit cannot drop  
Through this thick air—  
Fruit cannot fall into heat  
That presses up and blunts  
The points of pears  
And rounds the grapes.

Cut the heat—  
Plough through it,  
Turning it on either side  
Of your path.

### **Robert Browning How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix”**

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;  
I gallop'd, Dirck gallop'd, we gallop'd all three;  
“Good speed !” cried the watch, as the gate-bolts undrew;  
“Speed!” echoed the wall to us galloping through;  
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,  
And into the midnight we gallop'd abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace  
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place;  
I turn'd in my saddle and made its girths tight,  
Then shorten'd each stirrup, and set the pique right,  
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chain'd slacker the bit,  
Nor gallop'd less steadily Roland a whit.

'T was moonset at starting; but while we drew near  
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawn'd clear;  
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;  
At Düffeld, 't was morning as plain as could be;  
And from Mechelm church-steeple we heard the half chime,  
So, Joris broke silence with, “Yet there is time!”

At Aershot, up leap'd of a sudden the sun,  
And against him the cattle stood black every one,  
To state thro' the mist at us galloping past,  
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,  
With resolute shoulders, each butting away  
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray:

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back  
For my voice, and the other prick'd out on his track;  
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance  
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!  
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon  
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groan'd; and cried Joris “Stay spur!  
Your Roos gallop'd bravely, the fault's not in her,  
We 'll remember at Aix”—for one heard the quick wheeze  
Of her chest, saw the stretch'd neck and staggering knees,  
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,  
As down on her haunches she shudder'd and sank.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,  
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;

The broad sun above laugh'd a pitiless laugh,  
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff;  
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,  
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!

"How they 'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan  
Roll'd neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;  
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight  
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,  
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,  
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,  
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,  
Stood up in the stirrup, lean'd, patted his ear,  
Call'd my Roland his pet name, my horse without peer;  
Clapp'd my hands, laugh'd and sang, any noise, bad or good,  
Till at length into Aix Roland gallop'd and stood.

And all I remember is, friends flocking round  
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;  
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,  
As I pour'd down his throat our last measure of wine,  
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)  
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

### **Emily Dickinson I died for beauty**

I DIED for beauty, but was scarce  
Adjusted in the tomb,  
When one who died for truth was lain  
In an adjoining room.

He questioned softly why I failed?  
"For beauty," I replied.  
"And I for truth,—the two are one;  
We brethren are," he said.

And so, as kinsmen met a night,  
We talked between the rooms,  
Until the moss had reached our lips,  
And covered up our names.

### **Leigh Hunt Jenny Kissed Me**

JENNY kiss'd me when we met,  
Jumping from the chair she sat in;  
Time, you thief, who love to get  
Sweets into your list, put that in!  
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,  
Say that health and wealth have miss'd me,  
Say I'm growing old, but add,  
Jenny kiss'd me.

### **Coleridge Kubla Khan**

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.  
So twice five miles of fertile ground  
With walls and towers were girdled round:

And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills  
Where blossom'd many an incense-bearing tree;  
And here were forests ancient as the hills,  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But O, that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!  
A savage place! as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!  
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
A mighty fountain momently was forced;  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:  
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever  
It flung up momently the sacred river.  
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,  
Then reach'd the caverns measureless to man,  
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:  
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.  
It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw:  
It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on her dulcimer she play'd,  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me,  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,  
That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

#### **Helen Selina, Lady Dufferin. 1807–1867 Lament of the Irish Emigrant**

I'M sittin' on the stile, Mary,  
Where we sat side by side  
On a bright May mornin' long ago,  
When first you were my bride;  
The corn was springin' fresh and green,  
And the lark sang loud and high—  
And the red was on your lip, Mary,  
And the love-light in your eye.

The place is little changed, Mary,

The day is bright as then,  
The lark's loud song is in my ear,  
And the corn is green again;  
But I miss the soft clasp of your hand,  
And your breath warm on my cheek,  
And I still keep list'ning for the words  
You never more will speak.

'Tis but a step down yonder lane,  
And the little church stands near,  
The church where we were wed, Mary,  
I see the spire from here.  
But the graveyard lies between, Mary,  
And my step might break your rest—  
For I've laid you, darling! down to sleep,  
With your baby on your breast.

I'm very lonely now, Mary,  
For the poor make no new friends,  
But, O, they love the better still,  
The few our Father sends!  
And you were all I had, Mary,  
My blessin' and my pride:  
There 's nothin' left to care for now,  
Since my poor Mary died.

Yours was the good, brave heart, Mary,  
That still kept hoping on,  
When the trust in God had left my soul,  
And my arm's young strength was gone:  
There was comfort ever on your lip,  
And the kind look on your brow—  
I bless you, Mary, for that same,  
Though you cannot hear me now.

I thank you for the patient smile  
When your heart was fit to break,  
When the hunger pain was gnawin' there,  
And you hid it, for my sake!  
I bless you for the pleasant word,  
When your heart was sad and sore—  
O, I'm thankful you are gone, Mary,  
Where grief can't reach you more!

I'm biddin' you a long farewell,  
My Mary—kind and true!  
But I'll not forget you, darling!  
In the land I'm goin' to;  
They say there 's bread and work for all,  
And the sun shines always there—  
But I'll not forget old Ireland,  
Were it fifty times as fair!

And often in those grand old woods  
I'll sit, and shut my eyes,  
And my heart will travel back again  
To the place where Mary lies;  
And I'll think I see the little stile  
Where we sat side by side:  
And the springin' corn, and the bright May morn,  
When first you were my bride.

**Thomas Moore The Last Rose of Summer**

'TIS the last rose of summer  
Left blooming alone  
All her lovely companions  
Are faded and gone;  
No flower of her kindred,  
No rosebud is nigh,  
To reflect back her blushes,  
To give sigh for sigh.

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one!  
To pine on the stem;  
Since the lovely are sleeping,  
Go, sleep thou with them.  
Thus kindly I scatter  
Thy leaves o'er the bed,  
Where thy mates of the garden  
Lie scentless and dead.

So soon may I follow,  
When friendships decay,  
And from Love's shining circle  
The gems drop away.  
When true hearts lie withered  
And fond ones are flown,  
Oh! who would inhabit  
This bleak world alone?

**Carl Sandburg**  
**Laughing Corn**

THERE was a high majestic fooling  
Day before yesterday in the yellow corn.

And day after to-morrow in the yellow corn  
There will be high majestic fooling.

The ears ripen in late summer  
And come on with a conquering laughter,  
Come on with a high and conquering laughter.

The long-tailed blackbirds are hoarse.  
One of the smaller blackbirds chitters on a stalk  
And a spot of red is on its shoulder  
And I never heard its name in my life.

Some of the ears are bursting.  
A white juice works inside.  
Cornsilk creeps in the end and dangles in the wind.  
Always—I never knew it any other way—  
The wind and the corn talk things over together.  
And the rain and the corn and the sun and the corn  
Talk things over together.

Over the road is the farmhouse.  
The siding is white and a green blind is slung loose.  
It will not be fixed till the corn is husked.  
The farmer and his wife talk things over together.

**Thomas Love Peacock Love and Age**

I PLAY'D with you 'mid cowslips blowing,  
When I was six and you were four;  
When garlands weaving, flower-balls throwing,

Were pleasures soon to please no more.  
Through groves and meads, o'er grass and heather,  
With little playmates, to and fro,  
We wander'd hand in hand together;  
But that was sixty years ago.

You grew a lovely roseate maiden,  
And still our early love was strong;  
Still with no care our days were laden,  
They glided joyously along;  
And I did love you very dearly,  
How dearly words want power to show;  
I thought your heart was touch'd as nearly;  
But that was fifty years ago.

Then other lovers came around you,  
Your beauty grew from year to year,  
And many a splendid circle found you  
The centre of its glimmering sphere.  
I saw you then, first vows forsaking,  
On rank and wealth your hand bestow;  
O, then I thought my heart was breaking!—  
But that was forty years ago.

And I lived on, to wed another:  
No cause she gave me to repine;  
And when I heard you were a mother,  
I did not wish the children mine.  
My own young flock, in fair progression,  
Made up a pleasant Christmas row:  
My joy in them was past expression;  
But that was thirty years ago.

You grew a matron plump and comely,  
You dwelt in fashion's brightest blaze;  
My earthly lot was far more homely;  
But I too had my festal days.  
No merrier eyes have ever glisten'd  
Around the hearth-stone's wintry glow,  
Than when my youngest child was christen'd;  
But that was twenty years ago.

Time pass'd. My eldest girl was married,  
And I am now a grandsire gray;  
One pet of four years old I've carried  
Among the wild-flower'd meads to play.  
In our old fields of childish pleasure,  
Where now, as then, the cowslips blow,  
She fills her basket's ample measure;  
And that is not ten years ago.

But though first love's impassion'd blindness  
Has pass'd away in colder light,  
I still have thought of you with kindness,  
And shall do, till our last good-night.  
The ever-rolling silent hours  
Will bring a time we shall not know,  
When our young days of gathering flowers  
Will be an hundred years ago.

### **T S Eliot The Love Song of Alfred J Prufrock**

*S'io credesse che mia risposta fosse  
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,  
Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse.*

*Ma perciocche giammai di questo fondo  
Non torno vivo alcun, s'ìodo il vero,  
Senza tema d'infamia ti rispondo.*

LET us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread out against the sky  
Like a patient etherised upon a table;  
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,  
The muttering retreats  
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels  
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:  
Streets that follow like a tedious argument  
Of insidious intent  
To lead you to an overwhelming question ...  
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"  
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go  
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,  
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes  
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,  
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,  
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,  
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,  
And seeing that it was a soft October night,  
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time  
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,  
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;  
There will be time, there will be time  
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;  
There will be time to murder and create,  
And time for all the works and days of hands  
That lift and drop a question on your plate;  
Time for you and time for me,  
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,  
And for a hundred visions and revisions,  
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go  
Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time  
To wonder, "Do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?"  
Time to turn back and descend the stair,  
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—  
[They will say: "How his hair is growing thin!"]  
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,  
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin—  
[They will say: "But how his arms and legs are thin!"]  
Do I dare  
Disturb the universe?  
In a minute there is time  
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all:—  
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,  
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;  
I know the voices dying with a dying fall  
Beneath the music from a farther room.  
So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all—  
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,  
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,  
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,  
Then how should I begin  
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?  
And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all—  
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare  
[But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!]  
It is perfume from a dress  
That makes me so digress?  
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.  
And should I then presume?  
And how should I begin?

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets  
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes  
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows?...

I should have been a pair of ragged claws  
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!  
Smoothed by long fingers,  
Asleep ... tired ... or it malingers,  
Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.  
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,  
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?  
But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,  
Though I have seen my head [grown slightly bald] brought in upon a platter,  
I am no prophet—and here's no great matter;  
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,  
And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,  
And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,  
Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,  
Would it have been worth while,  
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,  
To have squeezed the universe into a ball  
To roll it toward some overwhelming question,  
To say: "I am Lazarus, come from the dead,  
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all"—  
If one, settling a pillow by her head,  
Should say: "That is not what I meant at all.  
That is not it, at all."

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
Would it have been worth while,  
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,  
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor—  
And this, and so much more?—  
It is impossible to say just what I mean!  
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:  
Would it have been worth while  
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,  
And turning toward the window, should say:  
"That is not it at all,  
That is not what I meant, at all."

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;  
Am an attendant lord, one that will do  
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,  
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,  
Deferential, glad to be of use,  
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;  
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;  
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—  
Almost, at times, the Fool.

I grow old ... I grow old ...  
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?  
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.  
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves  
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back  
When the wind blows the water white and black.

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea  
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown  
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

### **Robert Louis Stevenson My shadow**

I HAVE a little shadow that goes in and out with me,  
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.  
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;  
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—  
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;  
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an India-rubber ball,  
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,  
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.  
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;  
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,  
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;  
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,  
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

### **Rumi Ode 314**

Those who don't feel this Love  
pulling them like a river,  
those who don't drink dawn  
like a cup of spring water  
or take in sunset like supper,  
those who don't want to change,

let them sleep.

This Love is beyond the study of theology,  
that old trickery and hypocrisy.  
I you want to improve your mind that way,

sleep on.

I've given up on my brain.  
I've torn the cloth to shreds  
and thrown it away.

If you're not completely naked,  
wrap your beautiful robe of words  
around you,

and sleep.

### **Charles Lamb The Old Familiar Faces**

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions,  
In my days of childhood, in my joyful schooldays:  
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,  
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies:  
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:  
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—  
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man:  
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;  
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood,  
Earth seem'd a desert I was bound to traverse,  
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,  
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?  
So might we talk of the old familiar faces,

How some they have died, and some they have left me,  
And some are taken from me: all are departed;  
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

### **Christina Rossetti the Queen of Hearts**

How comes it, Flora, that, whenever we  
Play cards together, you invariably,  
    However the pack parts,  
    Still hold the Queen of Hearts?

I've scanned you with a scrutinizing gaze,  
Resolved to fathom these your secret ways:  
    But, sift them as I will,  
    Your ways are secret still.

I cut and shuffle; shuffle, cut, again;  
But all my cutting, shuffling, proves in vain:  
    Vain hope, vain forethought too;  
    The Queen still falls to you.

I dropped her once, prepense; but, ere the deal  
Was dealt, your instinct seemed her loss to feel:  
    'There should be one card more,'  
    You said, and searched the floor.

I cheated once; I made a private notch

In Heart-Queen's back, and kept a lynx-eyed watch;  
Yet such another back  
Deceived me in the pack:

The Queen of Clubs assumed by arts unknown  
An imitative dint that seemed my own;  
This notch, not of my doing,  
Misled me to my ruin.

It baffles me to puzzle out the clue,  
Which must be skill, or craft, or luck in you:  
Unless, indeed, it be  
Natural affinity.

### **Robert Frost The Road Not Taken**

TWO roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

### **Edgar Allen Poe The Tell-Tale Heart.**

TRUE! - nervous - very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses - not destroyed - not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily - how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture - a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees - very gradually - I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded - with what caution - with what foresight - with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it - oh so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly - very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! would a madman have been so wise as this. And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously-oh, so cautiously - cautiously (for the hinges creaked) - I undid it just so

much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights - every night just at midnight - but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he has passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.

Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I felt the extent of my own powers - of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back - but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness, (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers,) and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.

I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in bed, crying out - "Who's there?"

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening; - just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief - oh, no! - it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself - "It is nothing but the wind in the chimney - it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "It is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he had been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions: but he had found all I vain. All in vain; because Death, in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel - although he neither saw nor heard - to feel the presence of my head within the room.

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little - a very, very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it - you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily - until, at length a simple dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell full upon the vulture eye.

It was open - wide, wide open - and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness - all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person: for I had directed the ray as if by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot.

And have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the sense? - now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eye. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror must have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment! - do you mark me well I have told you that I am nervous: so I am. And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me - the sound would be heard by a neighbour! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once - once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and

examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs.

I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye - not even his - could have detected any thing wrong. There was nothing to wash out - no stain of any kind - no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all - ha! ha!

When I had made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock - still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart, - for what had I now to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbour during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises.

I smiled, - for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search - search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct: - It continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definiteness - until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

No doubt I now grew very pale; - but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased - and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound - much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath - and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly - more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations; but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men - but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed - I raved - I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder - louder - louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God! - no, no! They heard! - they suspected! - they knew! - they were making a mockery of my horror! - this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! And now - again! - hark! louder! louder! louder! louder!

"Villains!" I shrieked, "dissemble no more! I admit the deed! - tear up the planks! here, here! - It is the beating of his hideous heart!"

### **Edna St Vincent Millais Thou art not lovelier than lilacs**

THOU art not lovelier than lilacs,—no,  
Nor honeysuckle; thou art not more fair  
Than small white single poppies,—I can bear  
Thy beauty; though I bend before thee, though  
From left to right, not knowing where to go,  
I turn my troubled eyes, nor here nor there  
Find any refuge from thee, yet I swear  
So has it been with mist,—with moonlight so.

Like him who day by day unto his draught  
Of delicate poison adds him one drop more  
Till he may drink unharmed the death of ten,

Even so, inured to beauty, who have quaffed  
Each hour more deeply than the hour before,  
I drink—and live—what has destroyed some men.

### **Longfellow The Wreck of the Hesperus**

IT was the schooner Hesperus,  
That sailed the wintry sea;  
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,  
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,  
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,  
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,  
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,  
His pipe was in his mouth,  
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow  
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,  
Had sailed to the Spanish Main,  
'I pray thee, put into yonder port,  
For I fear a hurricane.

'Last night, the moon had a golden ring,  
And to-night no moon we see!'  
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,  
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,  
A gale from the Northeast,  
The snow fell hissing in the brine,  
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain  
The vessel in its strength;  
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,  
Then leaped her cable's length.

'Come hither! come hither! my little daughtèr,  
And do not tremble so;  
For I can weather the roughest gale  
That ever wind did blow.'

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat  
Against the stinging blast;  
He cut a rope from a broken spar,  
And bound her to the mast.

'O father! I hear the church-bells ring,  
Oh say, what may it be?'  
'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!—  
And he steered for the open sea.

'O father! I hear the sound of guns,  
Oh say, what may it be?'  
'Some ship in distress, that cannot live  
In such an angry sea!'

'O father. I see a gleaming light,  
Oh say, what may it be?'

But the father answered never a word,  
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,  
With his face turned to the skies,  
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow  
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed  
That saved she might be;  
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,  
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,  
Through the whistling sleet and snow,  
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept  
Tow'rds the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between  
A sound came from the land;  
It was the sound of the trampling surf  
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,  
She drifted a dreary wreck,  
And a whooping billow swept the crew  
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves  
Looked soft as carded wool,  
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side  
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,  
With the masts went by the board;  
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,  
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,  
A fisherman stood aghast,  
To see the form of a maiden fair,  
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,  
The salt tears in her eyes;  
And he saw her hair, like the brown seaweed,  
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,  
In the midnight and the snow!  
Christ save us all from a death like this,  
On the reef of Norman's Woe!