

## THE PASTURE

I'm going out to clean the pasture spring;  
I'll only stop to rake the leaves away  
(And wait to watch the clear water, I may):  
I shan't be gone long - You come too.

I'm going out to fetch the little calf  
That's standing by the mother. It's too young,  
It totters when she licks it with her tongue.  
I shan't be gone long - You come too.

--Robert Frost

## AFTER APPLE-PICKING

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree  
Toward heaven still,  
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill  
Beside it, and there may be two or three  
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.  
But I am done with apple-picking now.  
Essence of winter sleep is on the night,  
The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.  
I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight  
I got from looking through a pane of glass  
I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough  
And held against the world of hoary grass.  
It melted, and I let it fall and break.  
But I was well  
Upon my way to sleep before it fell,  
And I could tell  
What form my dreaming was about to take.  
Magnified apples appear and disappear,  
Stem end and blossom end,  
And every fleck of russet showing clear.  
My instep arch not only keeps the ache,  
It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.  
I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend.

And I keep hearing from the cellar bin  
The rumbling sound  
Of load on load of apples coming in.  
For I have had too much  
Of apple-picking: I am overtired  
Of the great harvest I myself desired.  
There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,  
Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.  
For all  
That struck the earth,  
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,  
Went surely to the cider-apple heap  
As of no worth.  
One can see what will trouble  
This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.  
Were he not gone,  
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his  
Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,  
Or just some human sleep.

--Robert Frost

## FIRE AND ICE

Some say the world will end in fire,  
Some say in ice.  
From what I've tasted of desire  
I hold with those who favor fire.  
But if it had to perish twice,  
I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
Is also great  
And would suffice.

--Robert Frost

## MENDING WALL

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
And spills the upper boulders in the sun,  
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.  
The work of hunters is another thing:  
I have come after them and made repair  
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,  
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,  
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,  
No one has seen them made or heard them made,  
But at spring mending-time we find them there.  
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;  
And on a day we meet to walk the line  
And set the wall between us once again.  
We keep the wall between us as we go.  
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.  
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls  
We have to use a spell to make them balance:  
'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'  
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.  
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,  
One on a side. It comes to little more:  
There where it is we do not need the wall:  
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.  
My apple trees will never get across  
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors'.  
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder  
If I could put a notion in his head:  
'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it  
Where there are cows?  
But here there are no cows.  
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know  
What I was walling in or walling out,  
And to whom I was like to give offence.  
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,  
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather  
He said it for himself. I see him there  
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top  
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.  
He moves in darkness as it seems to me~  
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.  
He will not go behind his father's saying,  
And he likes having thought of it so well  
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."

--Robert Frost

## THE GIFT OUTRIGHT

The land was ours before we were the land's.  
She was our land more than a hundred years  
Before we were her people. She was ours  
In Massachusetts, in Virginia,  
But we were England's, still colonials,  
Possessing what we still were unpossessed by,  
Possessed by what we now no more possessed.  
Something we were withholding made us weak  
Until we found out that it was ourselves  
We were withholding from our land of living,  
And forthwith found salvation in surrender.  
Such as we were we gave ourselves outright  
(The deed of gift was many deeds of war)  
To the land vaguely realizing westward,  
But still unstoried, artless, unenhanced,  
Such as she was, such as she would become.

--Robert Frost

## CANCIÓN DEL JINETE

Córdoba, lejana y sola.

Jaca negra, luna grande,  
y aceitunas en mi alforja. Aunque sepa los caminos  
yo nunca llegaré a Córdoba.

Por el llano, por el viento,  
jaca negra, luna roja,  
la muerte me está mirando desde las torres de Córdoba.

¡Ay qué camino tan largo!  
¡Ay mi jaca valerosa!  
¡Ay que la muerte me espera antes de llegar a Córdoba!

Córdoba, lejana y sola.

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*Cordoba,  
Distant and alone.*

*Black steed, grand moon.  
And olives in my saddlebags.  
Although I may know the roads  
I will never arrive to Cordoba.*

*Over the plain, by the wind,  
Black steed, red moon.  
Death is looking at me  
From the towers of Cordoba.*

*Oh, what a long road!  
Oh, my valient steed!  
Oh that Death waits for me,  
Before I arrive to Cordoba!*

*Cordoba,  
Distant and alone.*

--Federico García Lorca

## CROSSING THE BAR

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea,  
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;  
For though from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar.

--Lord Alfred Tennyson

## FROM HAMLET

I have of late--but wherefore I know not--lost all my mirth,  
forgone all custom of exercises; and, indeed, it goes so heavily  
with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me  
a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you,  
this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted  
with golden fire--why, it appears no other thing to me than  
a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.  
What a piece of work is man!  
How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty!  
In form and moving how express and admirable!  
In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god!  
The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals!  
And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?

--William Shakespeare

## CONCORD HYMN

(Sung at the completion of the battle monument on 19 April, 1836.)

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,  
Here once the embattled farmers stood,  
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;  
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;  
And Time the ruined bridge has swept  
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,  
We set today a votive stone;  
That memory may their deed redeem,  
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit that made those heroes dare  
To die, and leave their children free,  
Bid Time and Nature gently spare  
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

## WILL THERE REALLY BE A MORNING?

Will there really be a morning?  
Is there such a thing as day?  
Could I see it from the mountains  
If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like water-lilies?  
Has it feathers like a bird?  
Is it brought from famous countries  
Of which I have never heard?

Oh some scholar! Oh some sailor!  
Oh wise man from the skies!  
Please to tell a little pilgrim  
Where the place called morning lies!

--Emily Dickinson

## REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky,  
Dig the grave and let me lie.  
Glad did I live and gladly die,  
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you 'grave for me:  
*Here he lies where he longed to be;*  
*Home is the sailor, home from sea,*  
*And the hunter home from the hill.*

--Robert Louis Stevenson

## WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN

When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock,  
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of the struttin' turkey-cock,  
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the cluckin' of the hens,  
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes on the fence;  
O, it's then the time a feller is a-feelin' at his best,  
With the risin' sun to greet him from a night of peaceful rest,  
As he leaves the house, bareheaded, and goes out to feed the stock,  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

They's something kindo' harty-like about the atmusfere  
When the heat of summer's over and the coolin' fall is here  
Of course we miss the flowers, and the blossoms on the trees,  
And the mumble of the hummin'-birds and buzzin' of the bees;  
But the air's so appetizin'; and the landscape through the haze  
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airy autumn days  
Is a pictur' that no painter has the colorin' to mock  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty russel of the tossels of the corn,  
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves as golden as the morn;  
The stubble in the furries kindo' lonesome-like, but still  
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they grewed to fill;  
The strawstack in the medder, and the reaper in the shed;  
The hosses in theyr stalls below the clover overhead!  
O, it sets my hart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

Then your apples all is gethered, and the ones a feller keeps  
Is poured around the cellar-floor in red and yaller heaps;  
And your cider-makin's over, and your wimmern-folks is through  
With theyr mince and apple-butter, and theyr souse and sausage too!...  
I don't know how to tell it but ef such a thing could be  
As the angels wantin' boardin', and they'd call around on me  
I'd want to 'commodate 'em all the whole-indurin' flock  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

--James Whitcomb Riley

## RICHARD CORY

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,  
We people on the pavement looked at him:  
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,  
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,  
And he was always human when he talked;  
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,  
"Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich--yes, richer than a king--  
And admirably schooled in every grace:  
In fine, we thought that he was everything  
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,  
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;  
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,  
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

--Edwin Arlington Robinson

## LONDON, 1802

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:  
England hath need of thee: she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.  
Thy soul was like a Star and dwelt apart:  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea;  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on itself did lay.

--William Wordsworth

## THE TWO GLASSES

There sat two glasses filled to the brim,  
On a rich man's table, rim to rim;  
One was ruddy and red as blood,  
And one as clear as the crystal flood.  
Said the glass of wine to the paler brother:  
"Let us tell the tales of the past to each other;  
I can tell of banquet and revel and mirth,  
And the proudest and grandest souls on earth  
Fell under my touch as though struck by blight,  
Where I was king, for I ruled in might;  
From the heads of kings I have torn the crown,  
From the heights of fame I have hurled men down:  
I have blasted many an honored name;  
I have taken virtue and given shame;  
I have tempted the youth with a sip, a taste,  
That has made his future a barren waste.  
Greater, far greater than king am I,  
Or than any army beneath the sky.  
I have made the arm of the driver fail,  
And sent the train from the iron rail;  
I have made good ships go down at sea,  
And the shrieks of the lost were sweet to me,  
For they said, 'Behold how great you be!  
Fame, strength, wealth, genius before you fall,  
For your might and power are over all.'  
Ho! ho! pale brother," laughed the wine,  
"Can you boast of deeds as great as mine?"

Said the water glass: "I cannot boast  
Of a king dethroned or a murdered host;  
But I can tell of a heart once sad,  
By my crystal drops made light and glad;  
Of thirsts I've quenched, of brows I've laved,  
Of hands I have cooled, and souls I have saved;  
I have leaped through the valley, dashed down the mountain,  
Flowed in the river and played in the fountain,  
Slept in the sunshine and dropped from the sky,  
And everywhere gladdened the landscape and eye.  
I have eased the hot forehead of fever and pain;  
I have made the parched meadows grow fertile with grain;  
I can tell of the powerful wheel of the mill,  
That ground out the flour and turned at my will.  
I can tell of manhood debased by you,  
That I have lifted and crowned anew.  
I cheer, I help, I strengthen and aid;  
I gladden the heart of man and maid;  
I set the chained wine-captive free;  
And all are better for knowing me."

These are the tales they told each other,  
The glass of wine and the paler brother,  
As they sat together filled to the brim,  
On the rich man's table, rim to rim.

--Ella Wheeler Wilcox

## IN SCHOOL-DAYS

Still sits the schoolhouse by the road,  
A ragged beggar sunning;  
Around it still the sumachs grow,  
And blackberry vines are running.

Within, the master's desk is seen,  
Deep scarred by raps official;  
The warping floor, the battered seats,  
The jackknife's carved initial;

The charcoal frescoes on its wall;  
Its door's worn sill, betraying  
The feet that, creeping slow to school,  
Went storming out to playing!

Long years ago a winter sun  
Shone over it at setting;  
Lit up its western windowpanes,  
And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,  
And brown eyes full of grieving,  
Of one who still her steps delay  
When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy  
Her childish favor singled;  
His cap pulled low upon a face  
Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow  
To right and left, he lingered;  
As restlessly her tiny hands  
The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt  
The soft hand's light carressing,  
And heard the tremble of her voice,  
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word:  
I hate to go above you,  
Because" - the brown eyes lower fell -  
"Because, you see, I love you!"

Still memory to a gray-haired man  
That sweet child-face is showing.  
Dear girl! The grasses on her grave  
Have forty years been growing!

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,  
How few who pass above him  
Lament their triumph and his loss,  
Like her - because they love him.

--John Greenleaf Whittier

## A VAGABOND SONG

There is something in the autumn that is native to my blood -  
Touch of manner, hint of mood;  
And my heart is like a rhyme,  
With the yellow and the purple and the crimson keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry  
Of bugles going by.  
And my lonely spirit thrills  
To see the frosty asters like a smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gypsy blood astir;  
We must rise and follow her,  
When from every hill of flame  
She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

--Bliss Carman

## THE AIM WAS SONG

Before man came to blow it right  
The wind once blew itself untaught,  
And did its loudest day and night  
In any rough place where it caught.

Man came to tell it what was wrong:  
It hadn't found the place to blow;  
It blew too hard--the aim was song.  
And listen--how it ought to go!

He took a little in his mouth,  
And held it long enough for north  
To be converted into south,  
And then by measure blew it forth.

By measure. It was word and note,  
The wind the wind had meant to be--  
A little through the lips and throat.  
The aim was song--the wind could see.

--Robert Frost

## CHICAGO

Hog Butcher for the World,  
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,  
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;  
Stormy, husky, brawling,  
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your  
painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.  
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have  
seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.  
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women  
and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.  
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this  
my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to them:  
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be  
alive and coarse and strong and cunning.  
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall  
bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;  
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage  
pitted against the wilderness,  
Bareheaded,  
Shoveling,  
Wrecking,  
Planning,  
Building, breaking, rebuilding,  
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,  
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,  
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a  
battle,  
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his  
ribs the heart of the people, Laughing!  
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked,  
sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,  
Player with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

--Carl Sandburg

## ALONG THE ROAD

I walked a mile with Pleasure;  
She chattered all the way,  
But left me none the wiser  
For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow  
And ne'er a word said she;  
But oh, the things I learned from her  
When Sorrow walked with me!

--Robert Browning Hamilton