**The Seven Ages of Man**

--William Shakespeare

All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players,  
They have their exits and entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,  
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.  
Then, the whining schoolboy with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,  
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,  
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,  
Jealous in honour, sudden, and quick in quarrel,  
Seeking the bubble reputation  
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice  
In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,  
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,  
Full of wise saws, and modern instances,  
And so he plays his part.

**Crossing The Bar**

--Alfred, Lord Tennyson

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 tho’ 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.

**The Charge Of The Light Brigade**

--Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Half a league half a league,   
Half a league onward,   
All in the valley of Death   
Rode the six hundred:   
'Forward, the Light Brigade!   
Charge for the guns' he said:   
Into the valley of Death   
Rode the six hundred.   
  
'Forward, the Light Brigade!'   
Was there a man dismay'd ?   
Not tho' the soldier knew   
Some one had blunder'd:   
Theirs not to make reply,   
Theirs not to reason why,   
Theirs but to do & die,   
Into the valley of Death   
Rode the six hundred.   
  
Cannon to right of them,   
Cannon to left of them,   
Cannon in front of them   
Volley'd & thunder'd;   
Storm'd at with shot and shell,   
Boldly they rode and well,   
Into the jaws of Death,   
Into the mouth of Hell   
Rode the six hundred.   
  
Flash'd all their sabres bare,   
Flash'd as they turn'd in air   
Sabring the gunners there,   
Charging an army while   
All the world wonder'd:   
Plunged in the battery-smoke   
Right thro' the line they broke;   
Cossack & Russian   
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke,  
Shatter'd & sunder'd.   
Then they rode back, but not   
Not the six hundred.   
  
Cannon to right of them,   
Cannon to left of them,   
Cannon behind them   
Volley'd and thunder'd;   
Storm'd at with shot and shell,   
While horse & hero fell,   
They that had fought so well   
Came thro' the jaws of Death,   
Back from the mouth of Hell,   
All that was left of them,   
Left of six hundred.   
  
When can their glory fade?   
O the wild charge they made!   
All the world wonder'd.   
Honour the charge they made!   
Honour the Light Brigade,   
Noble six hundred!

**Death**

--Emily Dickenson

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 labor, and my leisure too,  
For his civility.

We passed the school, where children strove  
At recess, in the ring;  
We passed the fields of gazing grain,  
We passed the setting sun.

Or rather, be passed us;  
The dews grew quivering and chill,  
For only gossamer my gown,  
My tippet only tulle.

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

Since then 'tis centuries, and yet each  
Feels shorter than the day  
I first surmised the horses' heads  
Were toward eternity.

**The Day Is Done**

--Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The day is done, and the darkness  
Falls from the wings of Night,  
As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight.  
  
I see the lights of the village  
Gleam through the rain and the mist,  
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me  
That my soul cannot resist:  
  
A feeling of sadness and longing,  
That is not akin to pain,  
And resembles sorrow only  
As the mist resembles the rain.  
  
Come, read to me some poem,  
Some simple and heartfelt lay,  
That shall soothe this restless feeling,  
And banish the thoughts of day.  
  
Not from the grand old masters,  
Not from the bards sublime,  
Whose distant footsteps echo  
Through the corridors of Time.  
  
For, like strains of martial music,  
Their mighty thoughts suggest  
Life's endless toil and endeavor;  
And to-night I long for rest.  
  
Read from some humbler poet,  
Whose songs gushed from his heart,  
As showers from the clouds of summer,  
Or tears from the eyelids start;  
  
Who, through long days of labor,  
And nights devoid of ease,  
Still heard in his soul the music  
Of wonderful melodies.  
  
Such songs have power to quiet  
The restless pulse of care,  
And come like the benediction  
That follows after prayer.  
  
Then read from the treasured volume  
The poem of thy choice,  
And lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The beauty of thy voice.  
  
And the night shall be filled with music  
And the cares, that infest the day,  
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.

**Jabberwocky**

--Lewis Carroll

`Twas brillig, and the slithy tove

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
  And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
  The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
  The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:  
  Long time the manxome foe he sought --  
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,  
  And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,  
  The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,  
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,  
  And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through  
  The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!  
He left it dead, and with its head  
  He went galumphing back.

"And, has thou slain the Jabberwock?  
  Come to my arms, my beamish boy!  
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!'  
  He chortled in his joy.  
  
`Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
  Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
  And the mome raths outgrabe.

**The Road Not Taken**

--Robert Frost

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.

**Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening**

--Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.  
My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.  
He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.  
The woods are lovely, dark and deep.  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

[**My Last Duchess**](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275mono.htm)

--Robert Browning

[That's](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275diction.htm) my last duchess painted on the wall,  
Looking as if she were alive. I call  
That piece a wonder, now; [Fra Pandolf's](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275pandolf.htm) hands  
Worked busily a day, and there she [stands.](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275period.htm)  
Will't please you sit and look at her? [I said](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275said.htm)   
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read  
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
That depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
But to myself they turned ([since](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275since.htm) none puts by  
The curtain drawn for you, but I) [10]   
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,  
How such a glance came there; so not the first  
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 't was not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps  
Fra Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps  
Over my lady's wrist too much" or "Paint  
Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff  
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough [20]  
For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
A heart - how shall I say? - too soon made glad,  
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er  
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
[Sir, 't was all one!](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275argue.htm) My favour at her breast,  
The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
The bough of cherries some officious fool  
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
She rode with round the terrace -all and each  
Would draw from her alike the approving speech, [30]  
Or blush,at least. [She thanked men](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275hyphen.htm) - good! but thanked  
Somehow - I know not how - as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
In speech - (which I have not) - to make your will  
Quite clear to such a one, and say, "Just this  
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss  
Or there exceed the mark"- and if she let  
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set [40]  
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse  
- E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose  
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;  
[Then all smiles stopped together.](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275neptune.htm) There she stands  
As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll meet  
The company below, then. I repeat,  
The Count your master's known munificence  
Is ample warrant that no just pretence [50]  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
At starting is my object. Nay, we'll go  
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze [for me](http://mason.gmu.edu/~lsmithg/275closure.htm).

**Gunga Din**

--Rudyard Kipling

You may talk o' gin and beer  
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,  
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it;  
But when it comes to slaughter  
You will do your work on water,  
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it.  
Now in Injia's sunny clime,  
Where I used to spend my time  
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,  
Of all them blackfaced crew  
The finest man I knew  
Was our regimental bhisti, Gunga Din.  
He was "Din! Din! Din!  
You limpin' lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!  
Hi! slippery hitherao!  
Water, get it! Panee lao!  
You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din."  
  
The uniform 'e wore  
Was nothin' much before,  
An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind,  
For a piece o' twisty rag  
An' a goatskin water-bag  
Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.  
When the sweatin' troop-train lay  
In a sidin' through the day,  
Where the 'eat would make your bloomin' eyebrows crawl,  
We shouted "Harry By!"  
Till our throats were bricky-dry,  
Then we wopped 'im 'cause 'e couldn't serve us all.  
It was "Din! Din! Din!  
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you been?  
You put some juldee in it   
Or I'll marrow you this minute  
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"  
  
'E would dot an' carry one  
Till the longest day was done;  
An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.  
If we charged or broke or cut,  
You could bet your bloomin' nut,  
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.  
With 'is mussick on 'is back,  
'E would skip with our attack,  
An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire",  
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide  
'E was white, clear white, inside  
When 'e went to tend the wounded under fire!  
It was "Din! Din! Din!"  
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the green.  
When the cartridges ran out,  
You could hear the front-files shout,  
"Hi! ammunition-mules an' Gunga Din!"  
  
I shan't forgit the night  
When I dropped be'ind the fight  
With a bullet where my belt-plate should 'a' been.  
I was chokin' mad with thirst,  
An' the man that spied me first  
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.  
'E lifted up my 'ead,  
An' he plugged me where I bled,  
An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water-green:  
It was crawlin' and it stunk,  
But of all the drinks I've drunk,  
I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.  
It was "Din! Din! Din!  
'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is spleen;  
'E's chawin' up the ground,  
An' 'e's kickin' all around:  
For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din!"  
  
'E carried me away  
To where a dooli lay,  
An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.  
'E put me safe inside,  
An' just before 'e died,  
"I 'ope you liked your drink", sez Gunga Din.  
So I'll meet 'im later on  
At the place where 'e is gone --  
Where it's always double drill and no canteen;  
'E'll be squattin' on the coals  
Givin' drink to poor damned souls,  
An' I'll get a swig in hell from Gunga Din!  
Yes, Din! Din! Din!  
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!  
Though I've belted you and flayed you,  
By the livin' Gawd that made you,  
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din!

**The Man He Killed**

--Thomas Hardy

   "Had he and I but met  
        By some old ancient inn,  
We should have sat us down to wet  
        Right many a nipperkin!

        "But ranged as infantry,  
        And staring face to face,  
I shot at him and he at me,  
        And killed him in his place.

        "I shot him dead because –   
        Because he was my foe,   
Just so – my foe of course he was;   
        That's clear enough; although

        "He thought he'd 'list perhaps,   
        Off-hand like – just as I –   
Was out of work – had sold his traps –   
        No other reason why.

        "Yes; quaint and curious war is!   
        You shoot a fellow down   
You'd treat if met where any bar is,   
        Or help to half-a-crown."

**The Tiger**

--William Blake

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?  
  
In what distant deeps or skies  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare seize the fire?  
  
And what shoulder, and what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? and what dread feet?  
  
What the hammer? what the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?  
  
When the stars threw down their spears,  
And watered heaven with their tears,  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?  
  
Tiger! Tiger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?



**O Captain My Captain**

--Walt Whitman

O Captain my Captain! our fearful trip is done,  
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won,  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;  
But O heart! heart! heart!  
O the bleeding drops of red,  
Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.  
  
O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up--for you the flag is flung for you the bugle trills,  
For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths for you the shores a-crowding,  
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;  
Here Captain! dear father!  
This arm beneath your head!  
It is some dream that on the deck,  
You've fallen cold and dead.  
  
My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;  
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;  
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;  
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!  
But I, with mournful tread,  
Walk the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

**Chicago**

--Carl Sandburg

     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.

**He Wishes For The Cloths Of Heaven**

--W.B. Yeats

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,  
Enwrought with golden and silver light,  
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths  
Of night and light and the half-light,  
I would spread the cloths under your feet:  
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;  
I have spread my dreams under your feet;  
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

**In Just**

--e.e. cummings

in Just-  
spring       when the world is mud-  
luscious the little  
lame baloonman

whistles       far       and wee

and eddieandbill come  
running from marbles and  
piracies and it's  
spring

when the world is puddle-wonderful

the queer  
old baloonman whistles  
far       and         wee  
and bettyandisbel come dancing

from hop-scotch and jump-rope and

it's  
spring  
and

       the

               goat-footed

baloonMan       whistles  
far  
and  
wee

**The Cremation of Sam McGee**

--Robert Service

There are strange things done in the midnight sun   
By the men who moil for gold;   
The Arctic trails have their secret tales   
That would make your blood run cold;   
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,   
But the queerest they ever did see   
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge   
I cremated Sam McGee.

Now Sam McGee was from Tennessee, where the cotton blooms and blows.  
Why he left his home in the South to roam ‘round the Pole, God only knows.  
He was always cold, but the land of gold seemed to hold him like a spell;  
Though he’d often say in his homely way that “he’d sooner live in hell.”

On a Christmas Day we were mushing our way over the Dawson trail.  
Talk of your cold! through the parka’s fold it stabbed like a driven nail.  
If our eyes we’d close, then the lashes froze till sometimes we couldn’t see;  
It wasn’t much fun, but the only one to whimper was Sam McGee.

And that very night, as we lay packed tight in our robes beneath the snow,  
And the dogs were fed, and the stars o’erhead were dancing heel and toe,  
He turned to me, and “Cap,” says he, “I’ll cash in this trip, I guess;  
And if I do, I’m asking that you won’t refuse my last request.”

Well, he seemed so low that I couldn’t say no; then he says with a sort of moan:  
“It’s the cursed cold, and it’s got right hold till I’m chilled clean through to the bone.  
Yet ‘taint being dead—it’s my awful dread of the icy grave that pains;  
So I want you to swear that, foul or fair, you’ll cremate my last remains.”

A pal’s last need is a thing to heed, so I swore I would not fail;  
And we started on at the streak of dawn; but God! he looked ghastly pale.  
He crouched on the sleigh, and he raved all day of his home in Tennessee;  
And before nightfall a corpse was all that was left of Sam McGee.

There wasn’t a breath in that land of death, and I hurried, horror-driven,  
With a corpse half hid that I couldn’t get rid, because of a promise given;  
It was lashed to the sleigh, and it seemed to say: “You may tax your brawn and brains,  
But you promised true, and it’s up to you to cremate those last remains.”

Now a promise made is a debt unpaid, and the trail has its own stern code.  
In the days to come, though my lips were dumb, in my heart how I cursed that load.  
In the long, long night, by the lone firelight, while the huskies, round in a ring,  
Howled out their woes to the homeless snows—O God! how I loathed the thing.

And every day that quiet clay seemed to heavy and heavier grow;  
And on I went, though the dogs were spent and the grub was getting low;  
The trail was bad, and I felt half mad, but I swore I would not give in;  
And I’d often sing to the hateful thing, and it hearkened with a grin.

Till I came to the marge of Lake Lebarge, and a derelict there lay;  
It was jammed in the ice, but I saw in a trice it was called the “Alice May.”  
And I looked at it, and I thought a bit, and I looked at my frozen chum;  
Then “Here,” said I, with a sudden cry, “is my cre-ma-tor-eum.”

Some planks I tore from the cabin floor, and I lit the boiler fire;  
Some coal I found that was lying around, and I heaped the fuel higher;  
The flames just soared and the furnace roared—such a blaze you seldom see;

Then I burrowed a hole in the glowing coal, and I stuffed in Sam McGee.

Then I made a hike, for I didn’t like to hear him sizzle so;  
And the heavens scowled, and the huskies howled, and the wind began to blow.  
It was icy cold, but the hot sweat rolled down my cheeks, and I don’t know why;  
And the greasy smoke in an inky cloak went streaking down the sky.

I do not know how long in the snow I wrestled with grisly fear;  
But the stars came out and they danced about ere again I ventured near;  
I was sick with dread, but I bravely said: “I’ll just take a peep inside.  
I guess he’s cooked, and it’s time I looked;” . . . then the door I opened wide.

And there sat Sam, looking cool and calm, in the heart of the furnace roar;  
And he wore a smile you could see a mile, and he said: “Please close that door.  
It’s fine in here, but I greatly fear you’ll let in the cold and storm—   
Since I left Plumtree, down in Tennessee, it’s the first time I’ve been warm.”

There are strange things done in the midnight sun

By the men who moil for gold;

The Arctic trails have their secret tales

That would make your blood run cold;

The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,

But the queerest they ever did see

Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge

I cremated Sam McGee.

**Mending Wall**

--Robert Frost

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."

**Psalms 5**

**--**God

v1      LORD, hear my words.  
     Listen to what I am saying to you.

v2      My king and my God, listen to my voice.  
     I am praying to you for help.  
     I am shouting to you!

v3      LORD, at sunrise you will hear my voice.  
     I will watch and pray early in the morning.

v4      My God, you do not like what is wrong.  
     Bad people cannot live with you.

v5      Some people think that they are important.  
     They cannot stay near to God.  
     God, you hate everyone that does wrong.

v6      You destroy all that do not speak the truth.  
     The LORD hates all people that do murder.  
     He hates people that do not keep their promises.

v7      But I will come into your house  
     because you are so loving and kind.  
     I will bend low in your holy temple.

v8      Lead me in your righteous way  
     because of my enemies.  
     Make your path straight for me.

v9      Nothing that my enemies say is true.  
     They want to destroy me.  
     Their mouth is like an open grave.  
     They only speak what is not true.

v10    God, tell them that they are not right.  
     Show them that their ideas are wrong.  
     Send them away because they are bad.  
     They argued with you.

v11    Make all the people happy that hide with you.  
     Make them always sing for joy.  
     Cover them that love your name. Keep them safe.  
     Then they will rejoice in you.

v12    LORD, you do such good things to the righteous.  
     Your love is all round them.

**Death Be Not Proud**

--John Donne

Death be not proud, though some have called thee   
Mighty and dreadfull, for, thou art not so,   
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost overthrow,   
Die not, poore death, nor yet canst thou kill me.   
From rest and sleepe, which but thy pictures bee,   
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,   
And soonest our best men with thee doe goe,   
Rest of their bones, and soules deliverie.   
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,   
And dost with poyson, warre, and sicknesse dwell,   
And poppie, or charmes can make us sleepe as well,   
And better then thy stroake; why swell'st thou then;   
One short sleepe past, wee wake eternally,   
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.

**The Sacred**

--Stephen Dunn

After the teacher asked if anyone had   
     a sacred place   
and the students fidgeted and shrank

in their chairs, the most serious of them all   
     said it was his car,   
being in it alone, his tape deck playing

things he'd chosen, and others knew the truth   
     had been spoken   
and began speaking about their rooms,

their hiding places, but the car kept coming up,   
     the car in motion,   
music filling it, and sometimes one other person

who understood the bright altar of the dashboard   
     and how far away   
a car could take him from the need

to speak, or to answer, the key   
     in having a key   
and putting it in, and going.

**If**

--Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you  
But make allowance for their doubting too,  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream--and not make dreams your master,  
If you can think--and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two impostors just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with kings--nor lose the common touch,  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;  
If all men count with you, but none too much,  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And--which is more--you'll be a Man, my son!

**The Whipping**

--Robert Hayden

The old woman across the way  
    is whipping the boy again  
and shouting to the neighborhood  
    her goodness and his wrongs.  
  
Wildly he crashes through elephant ears,  
    pleads in dusty zinnias,  
while she in spite of crippling fat  
    pursues and corners him.  
  
She strikes and strikes the shrilly circling  
    boy till the stick breaks  
in her hand.  His tears are rainy weather  
    to woundlike memories:  
  
My head gripped in bony vise  
    of knees, the writhing struggle  
to wrench free, the blows, the fear  
    worse than blows that hateful  
  
Words could bring, the face that I  
    no longer knew or loved . . .  
Well, it is over now, it is over,  
    and the boy sobs in his room,  
  
And the woman leans muttering against  
    a tree, exhausted, purged—  
avenged in part for lifelong hidings  
    she has had to bear.

**Traveling Through The Dark**

--William Stafford

Traveling through the dark I found a deer  
dead on the edge of the Wilson River road.  
It is usually best to roll them into the canyon:  
that road is narrow; to swerve might make more dead.  
  
By glow of the tail-light I stumbled back of the car  
and stood by the heap, a doe, a recent killing;  
she had stiffened already, almost cold.  
I dragged her off; she was large in the belly.  
  
My fingers touching her side brought me the reason--  
her side was warm; her fawn lay there waiting,  
alive, still, never to be born.  
Beside that mountain road I hesitated.  
  
The car aimed ahead its lowered parking lights;  
under the hood purred the steady engine.  
I stood in the glare of the warm exhaust turning red;  
around our group I could hear the wilderness listen.  
  
I thought hard for us all--my only swerving--,  
then pushed her over the edge into the river.

**Richard Cory**

--Edwin Arlington Robinson

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.

**We Real Cool**

­­--Gwendolyn Brooks

We real cool. We  
Left school. We  
  
Lurk late. We  
Strike straight. We  
  
Sing sin. We  
Thin gin. We  
  
Jazz June. We  
Die soon.

**Ozymandias**

--Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,   
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone   
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,   
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown   
And wrinkled hp and sneer of cold command,   
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read,   
Which yet survive stamped on these lifeless things,   
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;   
.And on the pedestal these words appear:   
'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;   
Look on my works. Ye Mighty, and despair!'   
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay   
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare   
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

**I Am From (a poem for students to write)**

--Unknown

I am from  
My green blankey and  
Climbing out of my crib  
From playing mermaid in the bathtub.  
  
I am from walking my dog,  
And the noise he made when I step on his tail.  
  
I am from my sheep nightlight   
And Blue’s Clues and the Berenstain Bears.  
I am from spinning until  
I can’t tell where I am and   
Seeing the world upside-down.  
  
I am from long days at school  
And hurrying home to watch Pokémon.  
From chocolate-chip cookies at   
Grandma’s house.  
  
I am from July days in the pool  
And running through the sprinklers.  
From my imaginary friends and   
The games we used to play like   
Doctor and patient and teacher and student.  
  
I am from trips to the grocery store  
And that time I fell out of the cart onto the   
Sticky linoleum floor.   
  
I am from the tap tap tap   
Of my tap shoes that one week  
That I decided to be a dancer.  
I am from trying new things.

I am from trying new things.  
  
I am from rainy days  
And board games,  
Saturday cartoons and Cheerios.  
  
I am from walks on the beach  
And the sand on my feet,   
And not wanting to go home after vacation.  
  
I am from Barbies and Polly Pockets  
From playing with my sister,   
The other half of me.  
  
I am from books and flashlights  
And pens and paper.  
From silence to screaming.  
  
I am from tears on my pillow  
And unanswered cries.  
From holding your hand   
And that look in your eyes.  
  
I am from past and present  
And dreams of the future.  
I am from hard work and  
Harder play.   
And I am from writing down my thoughts   
On a midsummer’s day.

**The Negro Speaks of Rivers**

**--**Langston Hughes

I've known rivers:  
I've known rivers ancient as the world  
and older than the flow of human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathe in the Euphrates when dawns were young.  
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.  
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.  
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln  
        went down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy  
        bosom turn all golden in the sunset.

I've known rivers:  
Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.