

**CONTEMPORARY  
AMERICAN LITERATURE**

**I**

**SELECTED POEMS**

Concessionaire  
*On behalf of the Metropolitan  
Municipality*  
Hayrettin Güngör

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SELECTED POEMS

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Selim SOMUNCU





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## FOREWORD

The human being is born into an existing life. He continues his life sometimes by struggling with the ready-made circumstances he finds and sometimes compromising with them. Throughout his life, he yearns for the desire to be able in one direction and to stay in one direction. He strives not to be added to the *fait accompli* that will crumble his existence. In this endeavor, the factors that will support him should be durable so that he is not pushed into the abyss. The door should not be opened to unstable developments that will consume time. The human being should not waste the energy which he will live his life vividly. He should not face negativity in every respect. May he be a loyal follower of a life that ends in beauty and is adorned with beauty. It is only possible for a person to walk around peacefully in the land of salute through poetry. The consciousness that will make the human soul shine and ensure that it is taken a breath with the principles of beauty will be possible with the touch of poetry on the soul. In that case, as the bond is established with the word that makes life beautiful, well-being is planted in the human soul. One sets foot on the soil with a heart purified from its dirt. Poetry is the most important companion of this journey while human struggles to exist.

I believe that we should tell at every opportunity that our city, known as the capital of poetry and literature, also has a deep-rooted history that has been a cradle to cultures. The Seven Beautiful Men, who added a profound perspective to the artistic life and thought life of our country, contributed to the purification of a voice, a breath from its specks of dirt in the Anatolian geography by capturing the

rhythm of poetry that touches the human heart. Necip Fazıl Kısakürek, Sezai Karakoç, Nuri Pakdil, Erdem Bayazıt, Cahit Zarifoğlu, brothers Rasim and Alâeddin Özdenören, Mehmet Akif İnan, Bahaettin Karakoç and many others... They stand before us as milestones of our cultural heritage. Cultural heritage is the memory, past, perspective on the future and identity of nations. Nations that lose or ignore this heritage also lose their character, history and identity. Poets constitute the feelings, thoughts, worries, troubles and joy of the world of literature and the period they belong to, in other words, one of the most crucial points of life relations.

Literature has a very important place in Kahramanmaraş, the city of poets and the capital of poetry. Kahramanmaraş means poetry and poetry means Kahramanmaraş. In the process of becoming a City of Literature, included in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, Kahramanmaraş is interested not only in national literary works but also in international literary works. With the Modern American Poetry Selection for the literature of different nations, Kahramanmaraş continues to capture the universal timbre of art and literature with the inspiration and legacy of its past. We are happy to share with you the good news that our works on foreign literary works will continue.

Our citizens, especially our young people and children, who read these works will learn great examples of foreign kinds of literature as well as the literary accumulation of our city and will achieve much greater things in the future by being inspired by the works of both their own and different cultures.

As Kahramanmaraş Metropolitan Municipality, I would like it to be known that we will strive to deliver such selections to a wider readership and I hope that this and subsequent works to be useful.

**Hayrettin GÜNGÖR**

*Mayor of Kahramanmaraş Metropolitan Municipality*



## **Preface or an Introduction to Modern American Poetry (1850-1990)**

Just as the founding of America is considered a “recent period” in world history, American literature covers a period that can be called recent compared to the literature of other countries. However, when we look at its early stages, the beginning of American literature does not consist precisely of the distinct forms of the dominant genres, but primarily of the oral tradition of the natives, letters, histories, reports, diaries and religious works. In addition, the formation of a forced dependence on English literature within the colonial framework can be seen as the nourishing force of the early period. The search for a national literature weakened this dependence over time. The 19th century, which Daniel Royot calls the “age of development” of American literature, became a period in which the search yielded results in many ways and the ground of modern American literature began to take shape.<sup>1</sup> As the second half of the 19th century began, the genres of poetry and the novel were established in American literature, in chronological order, alongside an accumulation of experiences with romanticism and the American gothic, transcendentalism, feminism and humanism.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Royot, *American Literature*, Istanbul: İletişim Publications, 2007, p. 25.

After Edgar Allan Poe, who passed away in 1849, Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson, so to say, signed canonical texts in American poetry. As a matter of fact, while Harold Bloom set these two poets above Browning, Leopardi and even Baudelaire, he also accepted Whitman as the “Center of the American Canon”. One of the main reasons for this was that the poets from the later generations, such as especially T.S. Eliot and Wallace Stevens, were Whitman’s “true aesthetic heirs” (2018, p. 261). In fact, Whitman and Dickinson are the building blocks of 20<sup>th</sup> century American poets. In this respect, these two poets have an unshakable dominance on the adventure of the most important names such as Ezra Pound, Robert Frost, William Carlos, Marianne Moore, Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Penn Warren. For sure, many of them, while respectfully -or unknowingly- saluting the not-so-voluminous accumulation of American poetry, have also been followers of the new and different.

Among the innovative poets, Ezra Pound, in his *Cantos*, presented the outlines of Western society, while giving shape to a new imagist conception. He also developed a close association with troubadours and Ancient Greek culture. Rising with his relationship with Pound and his sense of gratitude to him, T.S. Eliot added, as Royot puts it, “the great myths of universal history” to his modernist poetry and became one of the strong pioneers of renewal.<sup>2</sup> (2007, p. 72). Joining the new poetry movement, Frost gained his popularity with poems that are the product of this approach. In addition to being innovative, his longing for tradition is like a sign of the synthesis or balance of old and new in modern American poetry. Stevens, whose works were published in the late periods of his life, wrote his poems on a deep

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<sup>2</sup> Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon*, İstanbul: İthaki Publications, 2018, p. 261.

intellectual ground and with a desire for aesthetics. Thus, while defining the elements of musical poetry, he developed ironic language against popular culture in some of his poems. Accepting poetry on the axis of pure art, just as Stevens did, William Carlos focused on a general readership rather than the elite group. In this respect, many of his poems differed from the aims of the epic poems of T.S. Eliot and Pound. Names such as Sylvia Plath, Elizabeth Bishop, and Theodore Roethke carried the ongoing tradition to new poetry and became part of the innovative generation that developed modern American poetry.

The transformation of Robert Lowell's poetry, who began his poetry adventure with tradition but shifted towards experimental poetry over time, also heralded a transformation in American poetry. Experimental poetry, the first traces of which were generally seen in the 1950s, became a starting point for many experimental poets after Lowell, and various groups such as Black Mountain, Beat and San Francisco were formed in this direction. The experimental poets, who were inspired by Expressionist painting and jazz, generally wrote their poems with a critical attitude towards the American bourgeoisie. Indeed, these extraordinary poems were also written and read as a sign of courage. Towards the 21st century, as a result of American multiculturalism, poets and writers of various ethnic backgrounds took their place in the literary scene of the United States. By the 1990s, this situation was reflected in a wide range of research and field of activity.

This book has been prepared as an anthology of Modern American poetry. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this work, especially the staff of Kahramanmaraş Metropolitan Municipality Culture, Tourism and Sports Department, which includes poems by almost all of the poets mentioned above.

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Selim SOMUNCU**

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## WILLIAM STAFFORD

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William Stafford was born on January 17, 1914, in Kansas, United States. The environment he grew up in, with its focus on nature and environmental interactions, became fundamental in shaping his later literary works. During World War II, Stafford served in the American Army. However, rather than dwelling on the violence and destructive effects of the war, he adopted a literary approach that centered on people's inner worlds and simple beauties. After the war, he continued his education and studied English literature at the University of Oregon. Throughout his writing career, Stafford penned poetry, essays, and stories. He published over 20 books of poetry, along with numerous essays and writing collections. His works often revolved around inner thoughts, the beauties of nature, and observations of daily human life. Stafford's literary persona was known for its simplicity and sincerity. Instead of using complex and embellished language in his poems, he preferred a style closer to everyday conversational language. His belief in the value of every moment and experience resonated through his works. Additionally, Stafford is recognized as a teacher who conducted writing workshops. He taught at the University of Oregon and other places, offering guidance and inspiration to students and fellow writers. He believed in the creative process of literature and in the potential for everyone to tap into their writing abilities. William Stafford passed away on August 28, 1993, in Oregon. However, his works continue to live on in the literary world and in readers' minds. He was an original American poet and writer who offered a profound understanding of inner peace and the beauty of nature.

## **FIFTEEN| William Stafford**

South of the Bridge on Seventeenth  
I found back of the willows one summer  
day a motorcycle with engine running  
as it lay on its side, ticking over  
slowly in the high grass. I was fifteen.

I admired all that pulsing gleam, the  
shiny flanks, the demure headlights  
fringed where it lay; I led it gently  
to the road and stood with that  
companion, ready and friendly. I was fifteen.

We could find the end of a road, meet  
the sky on out Seventeenth. I thought about  
hills, and patting the handle got back a confident  
opinion. On the bridge we indulged  
a forward feeling, a tremble. I was fifteen.

Thinking, back farther in the grass I found  
the owner, just coming to, where he had flipped  
over the rail. He had blood on his hand, was pale—  
I helped him walk to his machine.  
He ran his hand over it, called me a good man, roared  
away. I stood there, fifteen.

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## **ALFRED NOYES**

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Alfred Noyes was born on September 16, 1880, in Wolverhampton, England. His father was the writer and artist Alfred Noyes Sr. His interest in literature became apparent from a young age. He studied at the University of Oxford, where he delved deeply into literary studies. Noyes wrote poems particularly in a romantic and lyrical style in the early 20th century. His works delved intensely into themes of love, nature, and human emotions. "The Highwayman" is one of Noyes' most recognized poems, skillfully combining romance and dramatic storytelling. This work still maintains its significance as a well-known and studied piece in literature courses. Noyes also wrote novels, essays, and other poetry collections. He lived in the United States for a period and continued his writings there as well. Throughout different phases of his life, he shuttled between England and America, sustaining his literary pursuits. Alfred Noyes has made significant contributions to the literary world and is remembered as an author who dealt with romanticism and emotional intensity in his works. He continued his literary endeavors until his death on June 25, 1958, and his writings continue to capture the interest of readers and researchers.

## THE HIGHWAYMAN | Alfred Noyes

### Part One

#### I

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,  
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,  
The road was a ribbon of moonlight, over the purple moor,  
And the highwayman came riding—

Riding—riding—

The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

#### II

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace at his chin,  
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;  
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the thigh!  
And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,

His pistol butts a-twinkle,

His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

#### III

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-yard,  
And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was  
locked and barred;

He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be  
waiting there

But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,

Bess, the land-lord's daughter,

Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

#### IV

And dark in the old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked  
Where Tim the ostler listened; his face was white and peaked;  
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,  
But he loved the landlord's daughter,

The landlord's red-lipped daughter,

Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say—

#### V

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize tonight,  
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning light;  
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,  
Then look for me by moonlight,

Watch for me by moonlight,

I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way."

#### VI

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,  
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt like a brand  
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;  
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,

(Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight!

Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped  
away to the West.

### Part Two

#### I

He did not come in the dawning; he did not come at noon;  
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon,  
When the road was a gipsy's ribbon, looping the purple moor,  
A red-coat troop came marching—



Marching—marching—

King George's men came marching, up to the old inn-door.

## II

They said no word to the landlord; they drank his ale instead,  
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot of her  
narrow bed;

Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their side!

There was death at every window;

And hell at one dark window;

For Bess could see, through the casement, the road that  
he would ride.

## III

They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering jest;

They bound a musket beside her, with the barrel beneath her breast!

“Now keep good watch!” and they kissed her.

She heard the dead man say—

Look for me by moonlight;

Watch for me by moonlight;

I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way!

## IV

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held good!

She writhed her hands till here fingers were wet with sweat or  
blood!

They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours  
crawled by like years,

Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,

Cold, on the stroke of midnight,

The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least was hers!

## V

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for the  
rest!





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## PHYLLIS MCGINLEY

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Phyllis McGinley (1905-1978) was an American poet and writer known for her humorous and family-focused poetry. She was born on March 21, 1905, in Ontario, Oregon. McGinley gained prominence for her insightful and witty poems that explored the everyday aspects of life, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s. She grew up in New Rochelle, New York, where her family moved when she was young. After completing her education at Barnard College with a degree in English language and literature, she worked as an editor for the New York Herald Tribune.

Starting her literary career in the 1930s, McGinley's humorous approach to topics such as marriage, family relationships, and child-rearing became her trademark. Her poems were characterized by their fluid and easily understandable language, concealing depth and cleverness beneath the surface. One of her most acclaimed works is the book "Times Three: Selected Verse from Three Decades with Seventy New Poems," which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1960. This achievement made her one of the first women to win a Pulitzer Prize in poetry.

McGinley also authored children's books, including the popular "The Year Without a Santa Claus," which later became known for its animated adaptations and television specials. With her works centered around family life and the every day, Phyllis McGinley garnered a wide readership, establishing herself as a popular author in America. She continued to write until her passing in 1978.

## **FIRST LESSON| Phyllis Mcginley**

The thing to remember about fathers is, they're men.  
A girl has to keep it in mind.  
They are dragon-seekers, bent on improbable rescues.  
Scratch any father, you find  
Someone chock-full of qualms and romantic terrors,  
Believing change is a threat-  
Like your first shoes with heels on, like your first bicycle  
It took such months to get.

Walk in strange woods, they warn you about the snakes  
there.  
Climb, and they fear you'll fall.  
Books, angular looks, swimming in deep water-  
Fathers mistrust them all.  
Men are the worriers. It is difficult for them  
To learn what they must learn:  
How you have a journey to take and very likely,  
For a while, will not return.

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## ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

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Robert P. Tristram Coffin (1892-1955) was an American poet, writer, and educator. Throughout his literary career, he wrote poems, stories, novels, and essays. He was born and raised in the state of Maine. Coffin also taught at Bowdoin College, providing literature classes to students. Coffin's writings often revolved around rural life in America, nature, and the relationship of people with the natural world. Natural and pastoral themes were integral to his works. His poems and writings focused on America's cultural and historical heritage, exploring these subjects with emphasis. In 1924, he won the Pulitzer Prize with his work "Poems of Robert Frost: A Boy's Will and North of Boston." This award recognized his literary achievements and drew attention to his talent. He also wrote a novel called "Born and Raised in Maine," which depicted the daily life in Maine. This novel provided a rich portrayal of rural American life. The Coffin is particularly known for his nature descriptions and local color in his poems. His works often captured the atmosphere of the New England region specifically Maine. Additionally, his teaching at Bowdoin College had a significant influence on young writers and students. The literary legacy of Robert P. Tristram Coffin is acknowledged as contributing to American literature's exploration of rural life and nature themes. His works offer strong and insightful observations that contribute to understanding American culture and landscapes.

## **THE SECRET HEART | Robert P. Tristram Coffin**

Across the years he could recall  
His father one way best of all.

In the stillest hour of night  
The boy awakened to a light.

Half in dreams, he saw his sire  
With his great hands full of fire.

The man had struck a match to see  
If his son slept peacefully.

He held his palms each side the spark  
His love had kindled in the dark.

His two hands were curved apart  
In the semblance of a heart.

He wore, it seemed to his small son,  
A bare heart on his hidden one,

A heart that gave out such a glow  
No son awake could bear to know.

It showed a look upon a face  
Too tender for the day to trace.

One instant, it lit all about,  
And then the secret heart went out.

But it shone long enough for one  
To know that hands held up the sun.

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## STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

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Stephen Vincent Benét (1898-1943) is known as an American writer. Born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Benét started writing at a young age due to the literary environment in his family. His father was also a writer. He attended Yale University and continued to nurture his passion for writing there. During World War I, he served as a soldier, an experience that left its mark on his subsequent works. After completing his education, he settled in New York and began to make a name for himself in the literary world.

Benét's works generally revolve around American history, culture, and mythology. One of his most famous works is the epic poem "John Brown's Body," which depicts the American Civil War and its consequences. This poem won the Pulitzer Prize in 1929. Additionally, his short story "The Devil and Daniel Webster," inspired by American folklore, has been adapted for the stage numerous times. Benét had a penchant for narrating the lives and experiences of historical figures through literature, a trait he frequently displayed in works like "Western Star." Among his novels are "The King's Henchman" and "The Last Circle," while his collection includes a wide array of stories and articles. He often referenced American folktales, folklore, and mythology in his works, thereby addressing various aspects of American culture. Stephen Vincent Benét passed away on March 13, 1943, in New York. However, his works continue to hold a significant place in the literary world, portraying the richness of American culture, the complexities of human nature, and the influences of history.



## **NIGHTMARE NUMBER THREE**

**Stephen Vincent Benet**

We had expected everything but revolt  
And I kind of wonder myself when they started thinking-  
But there's no dice in that now.

I've heard fellow say

They must have planned it for years and maybe they did.  
Looking back, you can find little incidents here and there,  
Like the concrete-mixer in Jersey eating the wop  
Or the roto press that printed "Fiddle-dee-dee!"  
In a three-color process all over Senator Sloop,  
Just as he was making a speech. The thing about that  
Was, how could it walk upstairs? But it was upstairs,  
Clicking and mumbling in the Senate Chamber.  
They had to knock out the wall to take it away  
And the wrecking-crew said it grinned.

It was only the best

Machines, of course, the superhuman machines,  
The ones we'd built to be better than flesh and bone,  
But the cars were in it, of course...

and they hunted us

Like rabbits through the cramped streets on that Bloody  
Monday,  
The Madison Avenue busses leading the charge.  
The busses were pretty bad--but I'll not forget  
The smash of glass when the Duesenberg left the show-room  
And pinned three brokers to the Racquet Club steps

Or the long howl of the horns when they saw men run,  
When they saw them looking for holes in the solid ground...

I guess they were tired of being ridden in  
And stopped and started by pygmies for silly ends,  
Of wrapping cheap cigarettes and bad chocolate bars  
Collecting nickels and waving platinum hair  
And letting six million people live in a town.  
I guess it was tha, I guess they got tired of us  
And the whole smell of human hands.

But it was a shock  
To climb sixteen flights of stairs to Art Zuckow's office  
(Nobody took the elevators twice)  
And find him strangled to death in a nest of telephones,  
The octopus-tendrils waving over his head,  
And a sort of quiet humming filling the air...  
Do they eat?... There was red... But I did not stop to look.  
I don't know yet how I got to the roof in time  
And it's lonely, here on the roof.

For a while, I thought  
That window-cleaner would make it, and keep me company.  
But they got him with his own hoist at the sixteenth floor  
And dragged him in, with a squeal.  
You see, they cooperate. Well, we taught them that  
And it's fair enough, I suppose. You see, we built them.  
We taught them to think for themselves.  
It was bound to come. You can see it was bound to come.  
And it won't be so bad, in the country. I hate to think  
Of the reapers, running wild in the Kansas fields,  
And the transport planes like hawks on a chickenyard,  
But the horses might help. We might make a deal with

the horses.

At least, you've more chance, out there.

And they need us, too.

They're bound to realize that when they once calm down.  
They'll need oil and spare parts and adjustments and tuning up.

Slaves? Well, in a way, you know, we were slaves before.  
There won't be so much real difference--honest, there won't.  
(I wish I hadn't looked into the beauty-parlor  
And seen what was happening there.

But those are female machines and a bit high-strung.)  
Oh, we'll settle down. We'll arrange it. We'll compromise.  
It won't make sense to wipe out the whole human race.  
Why, I bet if I went to my old Plymouth now  
(Of course you'd have to do it the tactful way)  
And said, "Look here! Who got you the swell French horn?"  
He wouldn't turn me over to those police cars;  
At least I don't think he would.

Oh, it's going to be jake.

There won't be so much real difference-honest, there won't-  
And I'd go down in a minute and take my chance  
I'm a good American and I always liked them-  
Except for one small detail that bothers me  
And that's the food proposition. Because, you see,  
The concrete-mixer may have made a mistake,  
And it looks like just high spirits.  
But, if it's got so they like the flavor ... well...

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## EVELYN TOOLEY HUNT

---

Evelyn Tooley Hunt (1900-1991), was an English author known for her contributions to children's literature. She spent her formative years in Bedfordshire, England, where she developed her passion for the literary arts. Hunt's educational journey led her to Bedford High School for Girls, where she further cultivated her interests. Throughout her life, Hunt had a multifaceted creative outlook. Apart from her literary pursuits, she delved into the world of art and engaged in various painting endeavors. Her creative talents extended to writing poetry and short stories as well. Hunt's prominence in the literary realm is particularly associated with her endeavors in children's literature. Notably, she gained recognition for her "The Brownie Scouts" series, which revolved around themes of camaraderie, friendship, and adventure among young girls. Through this series, Hunt highlighted values that resonated with her readers while providing a sense of excitement and exploration. Beyond "The Brownie Scouts," Hunt crafted an array of stories and books tailored to children's imaginations and experiences. Her works consistently demonstrated an astute focus on the world of children, capturing their perspectives and dilemmas with a profound understanding. Her stories were characterized by a language accessible to young readers, coupled with themes that were both entertaining and instructive. Evelyn Tooley Hunt's legacy rests primarily on her enduring impact on children's literature. Through her heartwarming narratives, she managed to touch the lives of countless young readers, introducing them to the world of storytelling while instilling valuable life lessons in the process. With her unique ability to bridge the gap between her creativity and the innocence of childhood, Hunt remains a cherished figure in the realm of children's literature.

## **TAUGHT ME PURPLE| Evelyn Tooley Hunt**

My mother taught me purple  
Although she never wore it.  
Wash-grey was her circle,  
The tenement her orbit.

My mother taught me golden  
And held me up to see it,  
Above the broken molding,  
Beyond the filthy street.

My mother reached for beauty  
And for its lack she died,  
Who knew so much of duty  
She could not teach me pride.

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## T.S. ELIOT

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T.S. Eliot, whose full name is Thomas Stearns Eliot, was a prominent American-British poet, essayist, playwright, and literary critic. He is considered one of the most important figures in 20th-century literature and is best known for his modernist poetry and his influence on the development of literary criticism. Eliot was born on September 26, 1888, in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. He attended Harvard University and later moved to England in 1914, where he settled and eventually became a British citizen. His most famous and influential works include: "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915): This poem is considered one of the pioneering works of modernist poetry. It explores the thoughts and anxieties of the titular character, J. Alfred Prufrock, in a fragmented and introspective manner. "The Waste Land" (1922): This is perhaps Eliot's most celebrated and complex work, a long poem that reflects the disillusionment and fragmentation of post-World War I society. It draws on a wide range of cultural and literary references and employs various narrative voices and styles. "Four Quartets" (1943): This is a series of four interconnected poems ("Burnt Norton," "East Coker," "The Dry Salvages," and "Little Gidding") that explore spiritual and philosophical themes, including time, memory, and human existence. "Murder in the Cathedral" (1935): A verse drama that chronicles the last days of Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and his conflicts with King Henry II. "The Hollow Men" (1925): A poem that reflects on the moral and emotional emptiness of the post-war era. Eliot's writing style is characterized by its use of intricate symbolism,

allusion, and often dense and complex language. His work often engages with themes of spirituality, existentialism, cultural decay, and the search for meaning in a rapidly changing world. Apart from his creative work, Eliot was also a notable literary critic. His essays, such as "The Sacred Wood" and "Tradition and the Individual Talent," played a significant role in shaping modern literary criticism and influencing the direction of literary studies. T.S. Eliot received numerous accolades during his lifetime, including the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948. He passed away on January 4, 1965, in London, leaving behind a lasting legacy in literature and the arts.

## PRELUDES| T.S. Eliot

The winter evening settles down  
With smell of steaks in passageways.  
Six o'clock.  
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.  
And now a gusty shower wraps  
The grimy scraps  
Of withered leaves about your feet  
And newspapers from vacant lots;  
The showers beat  
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,  
And at the corner of the street  
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps.  
  
And then the lighting of the lamps.



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## WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

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William Carlos Williams (September 17, 1883 - March 4, 1963) was a significant American poet, writer, and physician, recognized as a prominent figure within the modernist movement. Born in Rutherford, New Jersey, Williams had a mixed heritage of Puerto Rican, English, and Dutch origins in his family lineage. Striking a balance between medicine and writing due to his family's medical background, he traversed both fields. After receiving his undergraduate education at the University of Pennsylvania, he pursued medical studies at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. Following the attainment of his medical degree in 1909, he returned to his hometown of Rutherford, where he worked primarily as a paediatrician. Throughout his medical career, the experiences of his patients and the minutiae of everyday life deeply influenced the themes of his poetry. Williams embarked on his literary career with the publication of his first poems in the "Poetry" magazine in 1912. During the 1920s, he became associated with the Imagist movement, crafting poems using sharp, concrete imagery. One of his most renowned poems, "The Red Wheelbarrow," succinctly depicts an ordinary object while exemplifying his stylistic approach. "Spring and All," a collection featuring both poetry and essays, reflects his modernist approach. Williams emphasized simplifying language and highlighting concreteness in his poems, aiming to make poetry accessible to a broader audience. "Paterson," a five-book epic poem, delves into the city of Paterson, New Jersey, and American life. Williams captured the essence of exploring the meaning in everyday life and transforming simple objects into profound contemplations in his poetry. His works portray a rare figure that left a significant impact in both the fields of medicine and literature.

## THE LONELY STREET | William Carlos Williams

School is over. It is too hot  
to walk at ease. At ease  
in light frocks they walk the streets  
to while the time away.  
They have grown tall. They hold  
pink flames in their right hands.  
In white from head to foot,  
with sidelong, idle look—  
in yellow, floating stuff,  
black sash and stockings—  
touching their avid mouths  
with pink sugar on a stick—  
like a carnation each holds in her hand—  
they mount the lonely street.

## DANDELIONS|Deborah Austin

under cover of night and rain  
the troops took over.  
waking to total war in beleaguered houses  
over breakfast we faced the batteries  
marshaled by wall and stone, deployed  
with a master strategy no one had suspected  
and now all  
firing

pow  
all day, all yesterday  
and all today  
the barrage continued  
deafening sight.  
reeling now, eyes ringing from noise, from walking  
gingerly over the mined lawns  
exploded at every second  
rocked back by the starshellfire  
concussion of gold on green  
brining battle-fatigue  
pow by lionface firefur pow by  
goldburst shellshock pow by  
whoosh splat splinteryellow pow by  
pow by pow  
tomorrow smoke drifts up

from the wrecked battalions,  
all the ammunition, firegold fury, gone.  
Smoke drifts thistle-blown  
over the war-zone, only

here and there, in the shade by the  
peartree  
pow in the crack by the  
curbstone pow and back of the  
ashcan, lonely  
guerrilla snipers, hoarding  
their fire shrewdly  
never  
pow  
surrender

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## ROBERT FROST

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“Robert Frost (March 26, 1874 -January 29, 1963) was an American poet and author. He is considered one of the most important poets of American literature. Frost is known for his poems that explore topics such as nature, human relationships, and the meaning of life. His works often address the beauty and challenges of rural life, individual inner conflicts, and the human stance towards nature. Born in California, Frost spent his childhood and youth in the New England region. These experiences greatly influenced his interest in nature and the environment. His poems are often written in simple language and understandable style, yet beneath this simplicity lie deep thoughts and meanings. His descriptions of nature, the portrayal of changing seasons, and reflections of rural life are particularly emphasized. Some of Frost’s most famous poems include “The Road Not Taken,” “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” “Mending Wall,” and “Birches.” Throughout his life, he received numerous awards, including four Pulitzer Prizes, and in 1961, he was appointed by John F. Kennedy as the “Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress,” a position now known as the U.S. Poet Laureate, and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest literary honor in the United States. Frost passed away on January 29, 1963, in Vermont, but his poems continue to have an impact on the literary world and readers.

## **A HILLSIDE THAW | Robert Frost**

To think to know the country and not know  
The hillside on the day the sun lets go  
Ten million silver lizards out of snow!  
As often as I've seen it done before  
I can't pretend to tell the way it's done.  
It looks as if some magic of the sun  
Lifted the rug that bred them on the floor  
And the light breaking on them made them run.  
But if I thought to stop the wet stampede,  
And caught one silver lizard by the tail,  
And put my foot on one without avail,  
And threw myself wet-elbowed and wet-kneed  
In front of twenty others' wriggling speed  
In the confusion of them all aglitter,  
And birds that joined in the excited fun  
By doubling and redoubling song and twitter,  
I have no doubt I'd end by holding none.

It takes the moon for this. The sun's a wizard  
By all I tell; but so's the moon a witch.  
From the high west she makes a gentle cast  
And suddenly, without a jerk or twitch,  
She has her speel on every single lizard.  
I fancied when I looked at six o'clock  
The swarm still ran and scuttled just as fast.

The moon was waiting for her chill effect.  
I looked at nine: the swarm was turned to rock  
In every lifelike posture of the swarm,  
Transfixed on mountain slopes almost erect.  
Across each other and side by side they lay.  
The spell that so could hold them as they were  
Was wrought through trees without a breath of storm  
To make a leaf, if there had been one, stir.  
One lizard at the end of every ray.  
The thought of my attempting such a stay!

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## LOUIS UNTERMAYER

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Louis Untermeyer (1885–1977) is a notable American poet, editor, critic, and literary historian who left a lasting impact on the world of literature. Born on October 1, 1885, in New York, USA, Untermeyer garnered attention at a young age due to his interest in writing and poetry. Despite attending Columbia University, he shifted his focus to a literary career before completing his studies. In the early 20th century, Untermeyer found himself influenced by the modernist literary movement. He wrote poems, contributed articles to magazines, and established a presence within literary circles. His anthology titled “Modern American Poetry” (1921) contained works from prominent American poets of the time, becoming a reference source for readers interested in understanding the evolution of American poetry. While Untermeyer is recognized for his poetry books tailored for children and young adults, he also made his mark through literary critiques and essays. As a part of the modernist movement, he closely followed the literary trends of his era, contributing to the development of American literature. Throughout his career, Untermeyer received significant accolades, including the Pulitzer Prize. He passed away on December 18, 1977. However, his works and literary legacy continue to live on, inspiring generations within the literary world. Louis Untermeyer remains remembered as an unforgettable figure in American literature.



## **DOG AT NIGHT | Louis Untermeyer**

At first he stirs uneasily in sleep  
And, since the moon does not run off, unfolds  
Protesting paws. Grumbling that he must keep  
Both eyes awake, he whimpers; then he scolds  
And, rising to his feet, demands to know  
The stranger's business. You who break the dark  
With insolent light, who are you? Where do you go?  
But nothing answers his indignant bark.  
The moon ignores him, walking on as though  
Dogs never were. Stiffened to fury now,  
His small hairs stand upright, his howls come fast,  
And terrible to hear is the bow-wow  
That tears the night. Stirred by this bugle-blast,  
The farmer's hound grows active; without pause  
Summons her mastiff and the cur that lies  
Three fields away to rally to the cause.  
And the next county wakes. And miles beyond  
Throats ring themselves and brassy lungs respond  
With threats, entreaties, bellowings and cries,  
Chasing the white intruder down the skies.

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## MARIANNE MOORE

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Marianne Moore (November 15, 1887- February 5, 1972) was an American modernist poet, critic, translator, and editor. Her poetry is noted for its formal innovation, precise diction, irony, and wit. Moore used symbolic narratives to convey her observations and analyses in her poems. Moore was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and died in New York. She graduated from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania in 1909. In 1925, she was appointed the editor of *The Dial*, one of the United States' most significant literary and art magazines, at a time when she was beginning to be recognized as a pioneer of the new poetry movement. Her *Collected Poems*, published in 1951, won the Pulitzer, Bollingen, and National Book Awards, as well as the gold medal for poetry from the National Institute of Arts and Letters. Moore conveyed her social observations in her poems through psychological analyses and descriptions reflecting an enlightened perspective.

## FROM BIRD WITTED | Marianne Moore

With innocent wide penguin eyes, three  
large fledgling mocking-birds below  
the pussy-willow tree,  
stand in a row,  
wings touching, feebly solemn,  
till they see  
    their no longer larger  
    mother bringing  
something which will partially  
feed one of them.

Toward the high-keyed intermittent squeak  
of broken-carriage springs, made by  
the three similar, meek  
    coated bird's-eye  
freckled forms she comes; and when  
from the beak  
    of one, the still living  
    beetle has dropped  
out, she picks it up and puts  
it in again.

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## EMILY DICKINSON

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Emily Elizabeth Dickinson (December 10, 1830 -May 15, 1886) was an American poet. She was born in the town of Amherst in the state of Massachusetts. Her father was one of the leading lawyers and politicians of the town. She and her sister never married and lived with their family. Throughout her life, Dickinson rarely left Amherst. She attended a nearby school, went to Washington once, and to Boston two or three times. In 1862, she completely secluded herself at home, not meeting even her closest friends until her death. She devoted herself to writing in her secluded room. Her initial letters and descriptions about her reflect a lively and attractive girl. Critics later speculated that her withdrawal from the world may have been due to a hopeless love experience. Although her relationship and experiences with the outside world were limited, she is a creative and imaginative writer in her writings. Dickinson is one of the main masters of short lyric poetry and is an American poet who developed it in the 19th century. She is considered one of the most relevant American writers of her time, along with Walt Whitman. Dickinson's work was not well known during her lifetime, but after her death, her texts stood out for their innovative literary style.

## A BIRD, CAME DOWN THE WALK | Emily Dickinson

A Bird, came down the Walk:  
He did not know I saw;  
He bit an Angle Worm in halves  
And ate the fellow, raw.

And then, he drank a Dew  
From a convenient Grass,  
And then hopped sidewise to the Wall  
To let a Beetle pass.

He glanced with rapid eyes,  
That hurried all abroad  
They looked like frightened Beads, I thought.  
He stirred his Velvet Head.

Like one in danger; cautious,  
I offered him a crumb,  
And he unrolled his feathers  
And rowed him softer home

Than Oars divide the ocean,  
Too silver for a seam,  
Or butterflies, off banks of noon,  
Leap, plashless as they swim.

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## **VERN RUTSALA**

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Vern Rutsala (February 5, 1934 -April 2, 2014) was an American poet. He was born in McCall, Idaho. He studied at Reed College (B.A.) and received his M.F.A. from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. He taught English and creative writing at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon for over 40 years. He retired in 2004.

Rutsala spent most of his life in Oregon. He received the 2014 C.E.S. Wood Distinguished Writer Award from the Oregon Book Awards just two weeks before his death. Rutsala, who wrote 17 books, was a long-time professor at Lewis & Clark College in Portland and won many awards.

## **BIJOU | Vern Rutsala**

Huge, perfect creatures move across the screen  
to the rhythms of hidden bands.

Small, imperfect creatures slouch in plush seats  
and pull crystal tears from their eyes

when the intellectual dog is lost

or when the nearly nice supporting player  
is culled from the action by a villain arrow

while saving the blond-souled here.

They drop their tears and look around hopefully  
when they hear the bugle of a rescue party.

But the aisles are empty. Odorless horses  
spring onto the screen below waving flags.

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## **GWENDOLYN BROOKS**

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Gwendolyn Brooks (June 7, 1917 -December 3, 2000) was an American poet, author, and teacher. She often addressed the personal celebrations and struggles of ordinary people in her community in her poems. In 1950, she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for her poem "Annie Allen", becoming the first African American to receive this award. She served as the Poet Laureate of the State of Illinois from 1968 to 1976. She was appointed as the U.S. Poet Laureate for the term 1985-86. In 1976, she became the first African American woman to be inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Brooks was born in Topeka, Kansas, and grew up on the South Side of Chicago. While her father worked as a janitor for a music company, her mother was a concert pianist and school teacher who had received classical music training. Brooks reflected much of her life spent in Chicago in her poems. She described herself as an "organic Chicagoan" and found a multitude of different characters there that inspired her.



**STRONG MEN, RIDING HORSES|  
(LESTER AFTER THE WESTERN)  
Gwendolyn Brooks**

Strong Men, riding horses. In the West  
On a range five hundred miles. A Thousand. Reaching  
From dawn to sunset. Rested blue to orange.  
From hope to crying. Except that Strong Men are  
Desert-eyed. Except that Strong Men are  
Pasted to stars already. Have their cars  
Beneath them. Rentless, too. Too broad of chest  
To shrink when the Rough Man hails. Too flailing  
To redirect the Challenger, when the challenge  
Nicks; slams; buttonholes. Too saddled.

I am not like that. I pay rent, am addled  
By illegible landlords, run, if robbers call.

What mannerisms I present, employ,  
Are camouflage, and what my mouths remark  
To word-wall off that broadness of the dark  
Is pitiful.  
I am not brave at all.

## **OLD BALLAD I Lord Randal**

"O where ha you been, Lord Randal, my son?  
And where ha you been, my handsome young man?"  
"I ha been at the greenwood; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I'm wearied wi hunting, and fain wad lie down."

"An wha met ye there, Lord Randal, my son?  
An wha met you there, my handsome young man?"  
"O I met wi my true-love; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I'm wearied wi hunting, and fain wad lie down."

"And what did she give you, Lord Randal, my son?  
And what did she give you, my handsome young man?"  
"Eels fried in a pan<sup>2</sup>; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I'm wearied wi hunting, and fain wad lie down."

"And wha gat your leavins, Lord Randal, my son?  
And wha gat your leavins, my handsome young man?"  
"My hawks and my hounds; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I'm wearied wi hunting, and fain wad lie down."

"And what becam of them, Lord Randal, my son?  
And what becam of them, my handsome young man?"  
"They stretched their legs out an died; mother, mak my  
bed soon,  
For I'm wearied wi hunting, and fain wad lie down."

“O I fear you are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son!  
I fear you are poisoned, my handsome young man!”  
“O yes, I am poisoned; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I’m sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.”

“What d’ye leave to your mother, Lord Randal, my son?  
What d’ye leave to your mother, my handsome young  
man?”

“Four and twenty milk kye’; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I’m sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.”

“What d’ye leave to your sister, Lord Randal, my son?  
What d’ye leave to your sister, my handsome young  
man?”

“My gold and my silver; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I’m sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.”

“What d’ye leave to your brother, Lord Randal, my son?  
What d’ye leave to your brother, my handsome young man?”

“My house and my lands; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I’m sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.”

“What d’ye leave to your true-love, Lord Randal, my son?  
What d’ye leave to your true-love, my handsome young  
man?”

“I leave her hell and fire; mother, mak my bed soon,  
For I’m sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.”

## **GET UP AND BAR THE DOOR| Lord Randal**

It fell about the Martinmas time,  
And a gay time it was then,  
That our gudewife had puddings to mak  
And she boil'd them in the pan.

The wind blew cauld frae" east and north  
And blew intil the floor;  
Quoth our gudeman to our gudewife,  
"Get up and bar the door."

"My hand is in my hussyskep,  
Gudeman, as ye may see;  
An it shou'dna be barr'd this hunder year,  
It's ne'er be barr'd by me."

They made a paction' 'tween them twa,  
They made it firm and sure,  
That the first word whaever spak,  
Should rise and bar the door.

Than by there came twa gentlemen,  
At twelve o'clock at night,  
Whan they can see na ither house,  
And at the door they light

“Now whether is this a rich man’s house,  
Or whether it is a poor?”  
But ne’er a word wad ane o’ them speak,  
For barring of the door.

And first they ate the white puddings,  
And syne<sup>1</sup> they ate the black;  
Muckle thought the gudewife to hersell,  
Yet ne’er a word she spak.

Than ane unto the ither said,  
“Here, man, tak ye my knife;  
Do ye tak off the auld” man’s beard,  
And I’ll kiss the gudewife.”

“But there’s na water in the house,  
And what shall we do than?”  
“What ails ye at the pudding-bree?  
That boils into the pan?”

O up than started our gudeman,  
An angry man was he;  
“Will ye kiss my wife before my een,”  
And scaud’s me wi’ pudding-bree?”

O up than started our gudewife,  
Gied three skips on the floor;  
“Gudeman, ye’ve spak the foremost word;  
Get up and bar the door!”

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## RUDYARD KIPLING

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Rudyard Kipling (December 30, 1865 -January 18, 1936) was an English novelist, short story writer, poet, and journalist. He was born in British India, which inspired much of his work. Among Kipling's fictional works are the Jungle Book duology (The Jungle Book, 1894; The Second Jungle Book, 1895), Kim (1901), Just So Stories (1902), and many short stories, including "The Man Who Would Be King" (1888). His poems include "Mandalay" (1890), "Gunga Din" (1890), "The Gods of the Copybook Headings" (1919), "The White Man's Burden" (1899), and "If—" (1910). He is seen as an innovator in the art of the short story. His children's books are classics; one critic noted "a versatile and luminous narrative gift". Kipling was one of the most popular writers in the United Kingdom in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Henry James said, "Kipling strikes me personally as the most complete man of genius, as distinct from fine intelligence, that I have ever known." In 1907, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, making him the first English-language writer to receive the prize, and at 41, its youngest recipient to date. He was also sounded out for the British Poet Laureateship and on several occasions for a knighthood, all of which he declined. Following his death in 1936, his ashes were interred at Poets' Corner, part of the South Transept of Westminster Abbey. Kipling's subsequent reputation has changed with the political and social climate of the age. The contrasting views of him continued for much of the 20th century. Literary critic Douglas Kerr wrote: "He [Kipling] is still an author who can inspire passionate disagreement and his

place in literary and cultural history is far from settled. But as the age of the European empires recedes, he is recognised as an incomparable, if controversial, interpreter of how empire was experienced. That, and an increasing recognition of his extraordinary narrative gifts, make him a force to be reckoned with."

## DANNY DEEVER | Rudyard Kipling

'What are the bugles blowin' for?' said Files-on-Parade.  
'To turn you out, to turn you out,' the Colour-Sergeant said.  
'What makes you look so white, so white?' said  
Files-on-Parade.

'I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch,' the Colour-Sergeant said.  
For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can hear the  
Dead March play,  
The Regiment's in 'ollow square they're hangin' him today;  
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,  
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

'What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard?' said  
Files-on-Parade.

'It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold,' the Color-Sergeant said.  
'What makes that front-rank man fall down?' said  
Files-on-Parade.

'A touch o' sun, a touch o' sun,' the Colour-Sergeant said.  
They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are marchin' of  
'im round,  
They 'ave 'altd Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the ground;  
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin' shootin' hound—  
O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

'Is cot was right-'and cot to mine,' said Files-on-Parade.  
'E's sleepin' out an' far to-night,' the Colour-Sergeant said.  
'I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times,' said Files-on-Parade.



“E’s drinkin’ bitter beer alone,” the Colour-Sergeant said.  
They are hangin’ Danny Deever, you must mark ‘im to  
‘is place,

For ‘e shot a comrade sleepin’—you must look ‘im in  
the face;

Nine ‘undred of ‘is county an’ the Regiment’s disgrace,  
While they’re hangin’ Danny Deever in the mornin’.

‘What’s that so black agin the sun?’ said Files-on-Parade.

‘It’s Danny fightin’ ‘ard for life,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.

‘What’s that that whimpers over’ead?’ said Files-on-Parade.

‘It’s Danny’s soul that’s passin’ now,’ the Colour-Sergeant said.

For they’re done with Danny Deever, you can ‘ear the  
quick-step play,

The Regiment’s in column, an’ they’re marchin’ us away;

Ho! the young recruits are shakin’, an’ they’ll want their  
beer today,

After hangin’ Danny Deever in the mornin’.

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## ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

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Alfred Edward Housman (March 26, 1859 -April 30, 1936), commonly known as A. E. Housman, was an English poet and classical scholar. After an initial failure at university, he took up employment as a clerk in London and established his academic reputation by publishing as a private scholar. Housman was later appointed as Professor of Latin at University College London and then at the University of Cambridge. He is now regarded as one of the foremost classicists of his age and is ranked as one of the greatest scholars of all time. His editions of Juvenal, Manilius, and Lucan are still considered authoritative. In 1896, he emerged as a poet with a cycle called *A Shropshire Lad*. After a slow start, this captured the imagination of young readers, particularly its obsession with early death, which was especially appealing to them in times of war. His *Last Poems*, in 1922, increased his fame, and numerous settings of songs drawn from these collections further enhanced his reputation. After his death, more poems were published from his notebooks by his brother Laurence. By then, Housman's sexual orientation had begun to be questioned, but Housman himself made no admissions.

## **EIGHT O'CLOCK | A.E. Housman**

He stood, and heard the steeple  
Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town.  
One, two, three, four, to market-place and people  
It tossed them down.

Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour,  
He stood and counted them and cursed his luck;  
And then the clock collected in the tower  
Its strength, and struck.

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## DAVID HERBET LAWRENCE

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David Herbert Lawrence (September 11, 1885 -March 2, 1930), commonly known as D. H. Lawrence, was an English novelist, short story writer, poet, and essayist. His modernist works contemplate modernity, social alienation, and industrialization while advocating for sexuality, vitality, and instinct. Several of his novels, including *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow*, *Women in Love*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, were the subject of censorship trials due to their radical depictions of sexuality and explicit language use. Lawrence's views and artistic preferences earned him a controversial reputation; he spent much of his life in voluntary exile, which he described as a "savage enough pilgrimage". At the time of his death, he was scorned as a pornographer who had achieved success only through being indecent, avant-garde, and tasteless; however, in an obituary, English novelist and critic E. M. Forster challenged this widespread view, describing him as "the novelist of our generation with the greatest imaginative gift". Later, English literary critic F. R. Leavis also defended both his artistic integrity and moral seriousness.

Lawrence was born in Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, England. His father was an illiterate miner at Brinsley Colliery, and his mother was a former pupil-teacher who was forced to do manual work in a lace factory due to the family's financial difficulties. Lawrence spent his formative years in the coal mining town of Eastwood, Nottinghamshire. The house where he was born, 8a Victoria Street, is now the D. H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum. His working-class background and the tensions between his parents provided the raw

material for much of his early work. From a young age, Lawrence roamed the open, hilly country pieces and the remaining pieces of Sherwood Forest's Felley woods, initiating a lifelong appreciation for the natural world. Young Lawrence attended Beauvale Board School (now renamed Greasley Beauvale D. H. Lawrence Primary School in his honor) from 1891 to 1898 and was the first local student to win a county council scholarship to Nottingham High School. He left in 1901 and worked as a junior clerk at Haywood's surgical appliances factory for three months, but a severe bout of pneumonia ended this career.

## THE SNAKE| D.H. Lawrence

A snake came to my water-trough  
On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,  
To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark  
carob tree  
I came down the steps with my pitcher  
And must wait, must stand and wait, for there he was at  
the trough  
before me.

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in the  
gloom  
And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied  
down, over the edge of the stone trough  
And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,  
And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a  
small clearness,  
He sipped with his straight mouth,  
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his slack  
long body,  
Silently.

Someone was before me at my water-trough,  
And I, like a second-comer, waiting.  
He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do,  
And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,

And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips, and mused  
a moment,  
And stooped and drank a little more,  
Being earth-brown, earth-golden from the burning  
bowels  
of the earth  
On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking.  
The voice of my education said to me  
He must be killed,  
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the  
gold  
are venomous.  
And voices in me said, If you were a man  
You would take a stick and break him now, and finish  
him off.

But must I confess how I liked him,  
How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet, to  
drink  
at my water-trough  
And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless,  
Into the burning bowels of this earth?  
Was it cowardice, that I dared not kill him?  
Was it perversity, that I longed to talk to him?  
Was it humility, to feel so honoured?  
I felt so honoured.  
And yet those voices:  
If you were not afraid, you would kill him!

And truly I was afraid, I was most afraid,  
But even so, honoured still more  
That he should seek my hospitality

From out the dark door of the secret earth.

He drank enough  
And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken,  
And flickered his tongue like a forked night on the air,  
so black,  
Seeming to lick his lips,  
And looked around like a god, unseeing, into the air,  
And slowly turned his head,  
And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice adream,  
Proceeded to draw his slow length curving round  
And climb again the broken bank of my wall-face.

And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,  
And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders,  
and entered farther,  
A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his  
withdrawing into  
that horrid black hole,  
Deliberately going into the blackness, and slowly  
drawing  
himself after,  
Overcame me now his back was turned.

I looked round, I put down my pitcher,  
I picked up a clumsy log  
And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter.  
I think it did not hit him,  
But suddenly that part of him that was left behind  
convulsed  
in an undignified haste,  
Writhed like lightning, and was gone



Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the wall-front,  
At which, in the intense still noon, I stared with fascination.

And immediately I regretted it.  
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act!  
I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human  
education.

And I thought of the albatross,  
And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,  
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,  
Now due to be crowned again.

And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords  
Of life.  
And I have something to expiate:  
A pettiness.

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## **ELIZABETH BISHOP**

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Elizabeth Bishop (February 8, 1911 -October 6, 1979) was an American poet and short story writer. She was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, and was not even a year old when her father died. Her mother was committed to a mental hospital shortly thereafter. Bishop was initially sent to live with her maternal grandparents in Nova Scotia and later lived with her father's relatives in Worcester and South Boston. Bishop earned her bachelor's degree from Vassar College in New York in 1934. Independently wealthy, Bishop traveled to France, Spain, North Africa, Ireland, and Italy from 1935 to 1937, and then lived in Key West, Florida for four years. Her poems are filled with detailed descriptions of her travels and the scenery that surrounded her. Bishop won the Pulitzer Prize in 1956, the National Book Award in 1970, and the Neustadt International Prize for Literature in 1976. With the publication of her final book, *Geography III*, in 1977, Bishop was recognized as a major force in contemporary literature. Elizabeth Bishop died in her apartment at Lewis Wharf in Boston on October 6, 1979.

## THE FISH| Elizabeth Bishop

I caught a tremendous fish  
and held him beside the boat  
half out of water, with my hook  
fast in a corner of his mouth.

He didn't fight.  
He hadn't fought at all.  
He hung a grunting weight,  
battered and venerable  
and homely. Here and there

his brown skin hung in strips  
like ancient wall-paper,  
and its pattern of darker brown  
was like wallpaper:  
shapes like full-blown roses

stained and lost through age.  
He was speckled with barnacles,  
fine rosettes of lime,  
and infested  
with tiny white sea-lice,

and underneath two or three  
rags of green weed hung down.  
While his gills were breathing in  
the terrible oxygen

—the frightening gills,

fresh and crisp with blood,  
that can cut so badly—  
I thought of the coarse white flesh  
packed in like feathers,

the big bones and the little bones,  
the dramatic reds and blacks  
of his shiny entrails,  
and the pink swim-bladder  
like a big peony.  
I looked into his eyes

which were far larger than mine  
but shallower, and yellowed,  
the irises backed and packed  
with tarnished tinfoil  
seen through the lenses

of old scratched isinglass.  
They shifted a little, but not  
to return my stare.  
—It was more like the tipping  
of an object toward the light.

I admired his sullen face,  
the mechanism of his jaw,  
and then I saw  
that from his lower lip  
—if you could call it a lip—  
grim, wet, and weaponlike,

hung five old pieces of fish-line,  
or four and a wire leader  
with the swivel still attached,  
with all their five big hooks

grown firmly in his mouth.  
A green line, frayed at the end  
where he broke it, two heavier lines,  
and a fine black thread  
still crimped from the strain and snap

when it broke and he got away.  
Like medals with their ribbons  
frayed and wavering,  
a five-haired beard of wisdom  
trailing from his aching jaw.

I stared and stared  
and victory filled up  
the little rented boat,  
from the pool of bilge  
where oil had spread a rainbow

around the rusted engine  
to the bailer rusted orange,  
the sun-cracked thwarts,  
the oarlocks on their strings,  
the gunnels—until everything

was rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!  
And I let the fish go.

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## A.M. SULLIVAN

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A. M. Sullivan (1896-1980) was an American poet, radio broadcaster, editor and businessman. An advertising executive for Dun and Bradstreet, Inc., and later the editor of *Dun's Review*, Sullivan simultaneously maintained close ties with the literary world through a career as a radio broadcaster for the WOR-Mutual network's "New Poetry Program," the publication of 13 books of poetry, and membership in the Poetry Society of America, which included five terms as its President. The collection illuminates Sullivan's reconciliation of the two seemingly different aspects of his life, in which he urged upon fellow businessmen the need for ethics, humanitarianism and creativity in their lives while bringing managerial skills and organizational talents to his literary endeavors.

## **CAMERA| A.M. Sullivan**

Light disperses the silver  
on film in the shadow  
and memory is trapped  
in the blink of an eyelash

The kiss, the laugh, the poised hoof  
are framed in an instant  
A century ago Daguerre dipped a pencil in the eye of  
the sun  
and etched an image of man

on the surface of metal.  
making the past present  
and the dead men to linger  
pursuing the living  
with love from the lintel

Memory clings to the wall  
bent sapling hair blowing  
mast bent to the starboard.  
The wind forever in motion because time stumbles in  
darkness  
on a splinter of light

## TAKES TALENT| Don Marquis

there are two  
kinds of human  
beings in the world  
so my observation  
has told me  
namely and to wit  
as follows  
firstly  
those who  
even though they  
were to reveal  
the secret of the universe  
to you would fail  
to impress you  
with any sense  
of the importance  
of the news  
and secondly  
those who could  
communicate to you  
that they had  
just purchased  
ten cents worth  
of paper napkins  
and make you  
thrill and vibrate  
with the intelligence  
                                archy



## THE HEN AND THE ORIOLE | Don Marquis

well boss did it  
ever strike you that a  
hen regrets it just as  
much when they wring her  
neck as an oriole but  
nobody has any  
sympathy for a hen because  
she is not beautiful  
while everyone gets  
sentimental over the  
oriole and says how  
shocking to kill the  
lovely thing this thought  
comes to my mind  
because of the earnest  
endeavor of a  
gentleman to squash me  
yesterday afternoon when i  
was riding up in the  
elevator if i had been a  
butterfly he would have  
said how did that  
beautiful thing happen to  
find its way into  
these grimy city streets do  
not harm the splendid

creature but let it  
fly back to its rural  
haunts again beauty always  
gets the best of  
it be beautiful boss  
a thing of beauty is a  
joy forever  
be handsome boss and let  
who will be clever is  
the sad advice  
of your ugly little friend  
                                archy

## **THE SPRINTERS| Lee Murhison**

The gun explodes them.  
Pummeling, pistoning they fly  
In time's face.  
A go at the limit,  
A terrible try  
To smash the ticking glass,  
Outpace the beat  
That runs, that streaks away  
Tireless, and faster than they.

Beside ourselves  
(It is for us they run!)  
We shout and pound the stands  
For one to win,  
Loving him, whose hard  
Grace-driven stride  
Most mocks the clock  
And almost breaks the bands  
Which lock us in.

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## **THEODORE SPENCER**

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Theodore Spencer (1902-1949) was an American poet and academic. He graduated from Princeton University in 1923 and received his doctorate from Harvard University in 1928. He served as a faculty member at Harvard University from 1927 to 1949. In 1939, he was assigned to teach English literature at the University of Cambridge in England.

In 1942, he gave the Lowell lectures, in which he published his most significant work, "Shakespeare and Human Nature". He also published essays, short stories, and poems. Spencer's notebook is located at Princeton University and his documents are at Harvard University. Among the works published by Spencer are "The Paradox in the Circle" (1941), "An Act of Life" (1944), "Poems, 1940-1947" (1948), "An Acre in the Seed" (1949), and "Shakespeare and the Nature of Man: Lowell lectures, 1942" (1949).

## **THE DAY | Theodore Spencer**

The day was a year at first  
When children played in the garden;  
The day shrank down to a month  
When the boys played ball;

The day was a week thereafter  
When young men walked in the garden;  
The day was itself a day  
When love grew tall

The day shrank down to an hour  
When old man limped in the garden  
The day will last forever  
When it is nothing at all.

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## **WILLAM JAY SMITH**

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William Jay Smith (1918-2015) is recognized as one of America's prominent poets. Throughout his life, he made significant contributions to the literary world, particularly known as a master of lyric poetry. Here is a more detailed text about his life and literary direction: William Jay Smith was born on April 22, 1918, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He began his educational journey at Princeton University, where he honed his literary skills by teaching literature courses. During World War II, he served in the United States Air Force, and his wartime experiences served as inspiration for his poems on the theme of war. In 1952, Smith gained recognition in the literary world with his first published poem in "Poetry" magazine. He preferred to embrace traditional forms in his poems, using melodic and rhythmic language. In his works, he explored themes of nature, love, human relationships, and everyday life, aiming to provide readers with a profound contemplative experience. With a deep interest in French literature, Smith wrote poems in French and incorporated the influence of French literature into his works. He also made significant contributions to the literary world by translating the works of French poets into English. Smith is also known for his poetry written for children. By penning works such as "Laughing Time" (1955), he helped introduce young readers to literature.

Some of his notable poetry collections include "Poems" (1947), "The Tin Can and Other Poems" (1966), and "The World Below the Window: Poems 1937-1997" (1998). William Jay Smith is regarded as a prominent figure in American literature, and his works continue to be read and studied with great interest in the literary world.

## **THE CLOSING OF THE RODEO | William Jay Smith**

The lariat snaps; the cowboy rolls  
His pack, and mounts and rides away.  
Back to the land the cowboy goes.

Plumes of smoke from the factory sway  
In the setting sun. The curtain falls,  
A train in the darkness pulls away.

Goodbye, says the rain on the iron roofs.  
Goodbye, say the barber poles.  
Dark drum the vanishing horses' hooves.

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## SAMUEL W. ALLEN

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Samuel W. Allen (1917-2015) was an American lawyer, translator, academic, and poet. He wrote his African-originated poems under the pseudonym Paul Vesey. He was one of the first black poets to gain significant recognition in Europe and the United States. Allen was born on December 9, 1917, in Columbus, Ohio. His parents were college graduates, and his maternal grandmother wrote poetry and had served as a secretary to Booker T. Washington for a time. Allen studied sociology at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, but also worked on his writing with Harlem Renaissance novelist and critic James Weldon Johnson. He graduated with high honors in 1938. In 1941, he received a law degree from Harvard Law School. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1942 during World War II and served until 1946. After the war, he served as an assistant district attorney in New York. In 1947, thanks to the G.I. Bill (an allowance for post-war veterans), he had the opportunity to realize his dreams. He enrolled in the New School for Social Research in New York in 1947 and went to Paris in 1948. There, he took literature courses at the cultural organization Alliance Française and the prestigious French university Sorbonne. In 1949, he published his first poems in Richard Wright's magazine *Présence Africaine* or "African Presence". In 1951, he translated Jean-Paul Sartre's work *Orphee Noir* and later Leopold Senghor's *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Poesie Negre* into English. In 1956, he published his first book of poetry, *Elfenbein Zähne* or "Ivory Tusks", in Germany. In 1959, he published his work "Negritude and Its Relevance to the American Negro



Writer" through *Présence Africaine* and in 1962, he edited, introduced, and contributed to the work *Pan-Africanism Reconsidered*. In 1968, he was appointed to the faculty of humanities at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. His new career included prestigious visiting professorships and writing residencies at other institutions, a volunteer writing teacher position at a prison in Massachusetts, and a professorship at Boston University from 1971 until his retirement in 1981.

## **TO SATCH | Samuel W. Allen**

Sometimes I feel like I will never stop  
Just go on forever  
Till one fine mornin  
I'm gonna reach up and grab me a handfulla stars  
Swing out my long lean leg  
And whip three hot strikes burnin down the heavens  
And look over a God and say  
How about that!

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## **JOHN UPDIKE**

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John Updike is an American author. He won the Pulitzer Prize twice for his novels, which often depict the religious, middle-class suburban America. The recurring themes in his works are sex, faith, death, and relationships. His works have been published in *The New Yorker* magazine since the 1950s. He passed away on February 1, 2009, from lung cancer.

## **SUPERMAN | John Updike**

I drive my car to supermarket,  
The way I take is superhigh,  
A superlot is where I park it,  
And Super Suds are what I buy.

Supersalesmen sell me tonic  
Super-Tone-O, for Relief.  
The planes I ride are supersonic.  
In trains, I like the Super Chief.

Supercilious men and women  
Call me superficial- me,  
Who so superbly learned to swim in  
Supercolossality.

Superphosphate-fed foods feed me;  
Superservice keeps me new.  
Who would dare to supersede me,  
Super-super-superwho?

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## **ROBERT HAYDEN**

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Robert Hayden (1913-1980) was an American poet, essayist, and educator. He served as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 1976 to 1978, a role today known as US Poet Laureate. He was the first African American writer to hold the office. His works often depict the religious, middle-class suburban America. The recurring themes in his works are sex, faith, death, and relationships. His poetry collections include *Heart-Shape in the Dust* (1940), *Figure of Time* (1955), *A Ballad of Remembrance* (1962), *Selected Poems* (1966), *Words in the Mourning Time* (1970), *The Night-Blooming Cereus* (1972), *Angle of Ascent: New and Selected Poems* (1975), and *American Journal* (1978).

## **KID (CUERNAVACA) | Robert Hayden**

He is found with the homeless dogs  
That worry sidewalk cafes  
where gringos<sup>2</sup> in dollar bills  
deplore and sip. He has

Tricks of pathos for  
the silly foreigners  
and so manages not to starve.  
Waiters strike at him and curse;

Deft and quick and accustomed,  
he dances beyond their blows,  
taunts them and scampers off,  
laughing as he goes

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## **JOHN CIARDI**

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John Ciardi (1916-1986) was an American poet, translator, and etymologist. He served as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress from 1976 to 1978, a role today known as US Poet Laureate. He was known primarily as a poet and translator of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. He also wrote several volumes of children's poetry, worked on etymology, contributed to the *Saturday Review* as a columnist and long-time poetry editor, directed the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference in Vermont, and recorded commentaries for National Public Radio.

## **BIRDS, LIKE THOUGHTS | John Ciardi**

Watch a wild turkey come in to land  
(they are rare, but a man can find most  
of what he wants if he wants it enough  
to look for it)-you see a long slant  
out of the air, like the approach of  
some queer plane. Its landing gear first  
let down, then agitated, it starts to run  
before it touches, finishes yards on  
from the point of touchdown; and only then  
folds its wings and is back, a hen again.

Not wrens, warblers, swallows-(I can't even see  
what it is swallows do on the air. They  
change it, exceed it, make it serve impossibility)  
all smaller (not lesser) birds play  
instantly in and out of the air. There are no  
parts to their coming, going. A whirl and they light;  
a whirl and they are airborne. Watch a jay go  
its long dart through branches. It is too right  
to need caution. It lands like an arrow  
with no separation of its motion-So!  
And there it is, and instantly gone if it feels  
like it. Talk about landing on a dime!  
it could land on the edge of one. I've watched  
every bird I could find to look at as it wheels  
heaves, whirls, glides. Whatever is hatched  
to wings has its own way with them. But I'm  
sure of one thing: the more weight you take to air,  
the more space you need to get down,  
the more slowly. Birds are like thoughts: they're  
more instant as they stay light. Both come and gone.

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## DONALD HALL

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Donald Andrew Hall Jr. (September 20, 1928 – June 23, 2018) was an American poet, writer, editor, and literary critic. He was the author of over 50 books across several genres from children's literature, biography, memoir, essays, and including 22 volumes of verse. He was considered one of the major American poets of his generation. His poetry explores the longing for a more bucolic past and reflects the poet's abiding reverence for nature. Hall was a graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy, Harvard, and Oxford. Early in his career, he became the first poetry editor of *The Paris Review* (1953–1961), the quarterly literary journal, and was noted for interviewing poets and other authors on their craft. On June 14, 2006, Hall was appointed as the Library of Congress's 14th Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry (commonly known as "Poet Laureate of the United States"). He was respected for his work as an academic, having taught at Stanford University, Bennington College and the University of Michigan, and having made significant contributions to the study and craft of writing. He was also noted for the anthologies he edited and was a popular teacher, speaker, and reader of his own poems.



**THE SLEEPING GIANT | (A HILL, SO NAMED, IN  
HAM-DEN, CONNECTICUT) Donald Hall**

The whole day long, under the walking sun  
That poised an eye on me from its high floor,  
Holding my toy beside the clapboard house  
I looked for him, the summer I was four.

I was afraid the waking arm would break  
From the loose earth and rub against his eyes  
A fist of trees, and the whole country tremble  
In the exultant labor of his rise;

Then he with giant steps in the small streets  
Would stagger, cutting off the sky, to seize  
The roofs from house and home because we had  
Covered his shape with dirt and planted trees;

And then kneel down and rip with fingernails  
A trench to pour the enemy Atlantic  
Into our basin, and the water rush,  
With the streets full and all the voices frantic.

That was the summer I expected him.  
Later the high and watchful sun instead  
Walked low behind the house, and school began,  
And winter pulled a sheet over his head.

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## DAVID WAGONER

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David Wagoner (June 5, 1926 – December 18, 2021) was an American poet, novelist, and educator. He was recognized as a leading poet of the Pacific Northwest. His poetry often used nature as a metaphor. Wagoner served as a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets from 1978 to 1999. He won numerous prestigious literary awards and was a Professor Emeritus at the University of Washington. Wagoner passed away in his sleep on December 18, 2021, at the age of 95, in Edmonds, Washington.

## EVERY GOOD BOY DOES FINE | David Wagoner

I practiced my cornet in a cold garage  
Where I could blast it till the oil in drums  
Boomed back; tossed free throws till I couldn't move my  
thumbs;  
Sprinted through tires, tackling a headless dummy.

In my first contest, playing a wobbly solo,  
I blew up in the coda, alone on stage,  
And twisting like my hand-tied necktie, saw the judge  
Letting my silence dwindle down his scale.

At my first basketball game, gangling away from home  
A hundred miles by bus to a dressing room,  
Under the showering voice of the coach, I stood in a towel,  
Having forgotten shoes, socks, uniform.

In my first football game, the first play under the lights  
I intercepted a pass. For seventy yards, I ran  
Through music and squeals, surging, lifting my cleats,  
Only to be brought down by the safety man.

I took my second chances with less care, but in dreams  
I saw the bald judge slumped in the front row,  
The coach and team at the doorway, the safety man  
Gallop ing loud at my heels. They watch me now.

You who have always homed your way through passages,  
Sat safe on the bench while some came naked to court,  
Slipped out of arms to win in the long run,  
Consider this poem a failure, sprawling flat on a page.

## **MEDITATION ON HIS NINETY-FIRST YEAR John Haag**

This withered clutch of bones, this hand that held  
Two oxen and a plow steadily down  
An even furrow, now scarcely can hold  
The heavy reading-glass. An April sun  
Could bring me to a sweat when my thin blood  
Was warmer; now I'm tissue-dry and shake  
In any breeze that giddies this grey head.  
"The years have flown," a fellow patriarch  
Is fond of saying, but as I reflect  
Upon nine decades ripening steadily,  
Each measured year maturing, act by act,  
I wonder at him-could his memory  
Remain so barren that life disappears  
Into a limbo of forgotten years?

It's pleasant for me now to spin the past:  
A boyhood full of cows and berry-vines,  
Hay-ricks and wild birds, the journey west  
When I was seventeen, the evergreens  
And rivers and the rocks... I took a wife  
The fall that my first crop was harvested,  
And she was fruitful; under our first roof  
We reared four sons to carry on the blood.  
I've planted every year, yet never known

Two springs so much alike I could not tell  
One from the other; no two days have been  
Identical, and I can still recall  
Each acre tilled, each crop or foal or calf...  
The living things-these are my epitaph.

The doctor tells me I should not expect  
To live forever. After he has gone  
I smile to think that he, at thirty-eight,  
Cannot conceive how well, at ninety-one,  
I have accepted this absurd remark.  
Today the teacup chatters at my teeth;  
I feel the room grow colder, and I break  
With reveries and vague regrets that growth  
Is over, that the blood wears out, and then  
No more of things that breathe and climb, no more.  
But, though I feel the minutes growing thin  
And I've torn the last page from the calendar,  
I cannot grudge the passing of my breath  
After so much life, so little death.

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## HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

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Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (February 27, 1807 – March 24, 1882) was an American poet and educator. He was known for his lyric poems that often presented stories of mythology and legend. He became the most popular American poet of his day and also had success overseas. He wrote many original works including “Paul Revere’s Ride”, “The Song of Hiawatha”, and “Evangeline”. He was also the first American to translate Dante Alighieri’s *Divine Comedy* in its entirety. Longfellow was born in Portland, District of Maine, Massachusetts (now Portland, Maine). He graduated from Bowdoin College and after studying in Europe, he became a professor there and later at Harvard College. His first major poetry collections were *Voices of the Night* (1839) and *Ballads and Other Poems* (1841). In 1854, he retired from teaching to focus on his writing, spending the rest of his life in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in a former headquarters of George Washington during the Revolutionary War. His first wife Mary Potter died in 1835 following a miscarriage. His second wife Frances Appleton died in 1861 after her dress caught fire. After her death, Longfellow had difficulty writing poetry for a time and focused on his translation work. He died in 1882.

## PAUL REVERE'S RIDE | Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Listen, my children, and you shall hear  
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,  
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-Five:  
Hardly a man is now alive  
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march  
By land or sea from the town to-night,  
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry-arch  
Of the North-Church-tower, as a signal-light  
One if by land, and two if by sea;  
And I on the opposite shore will be,  
Ready to ride and spread the alarm  
Through every Middlesex village and farm,  
For the country-folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good night!" and with muffled oar  
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,  
Just as the moon rose over the bay,  
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay  
The Somerset, British man-of-war:  
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar  
Across the moon, like a prison-bar,  
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified  
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street  
Wanders and watches with eager ears,  
Till in the silence around him he hears  
The muster of men at the barrack door,  
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,  
And the measured tread of the grenadiers  
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed to the tower of the church,  
Up the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,  
To the belfry-chamber overhead,  
And startled the pigeons from their perch  
On the sombre rafters, that round him made  
Masses and moving shapes of shade, —  
Up the trembling ladder, steep and tall,  
To the highest window in the wall,  
Where he paused to listen and look down  
A moment on the roofs of the town,  
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,  
In their night-encampment on the hill,  
Wrapped in silence so deep and still  
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,  
The watchful night-wind, as it went  
Creeping along from tent to tent,  
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"  
A moment only he feels the spell  
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread  
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;



For suddenly all his thoughts are bent  
On a shadowy something far away,  
Where the river widens to meet the bay—  
A line of black, that bends and floats  
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,  
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride,  
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.  
Now he patted his horse's side,  
Now gazed on the landscape far and near,  
Then impetuous stamped the earth,  
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;  
But mostly he watched with eager search  
The belfry-tower of the old North Church,  
As it rose above the graves on the hill,  
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.  
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height,  
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!  
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,  
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight  
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village-street,  
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,  
And beneath from the pebbles, in passing, a spark  
Struck out by a steed that flies fearless and fleet:  
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,  
The fate of a nation was riding that night;  
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,

Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,  
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,  
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;  
And under the alders, that skirt its edge,  
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,  
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.  
It was twelve by the village clock  
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.  
He heard the crowing of the cock,  
And the barking of the farmer's dog,  
And felt the damp of the river-fog,  
That rises when the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,  
When he galloped into Lexington.  
He saw the gilded weathercock  
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,  
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,  
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,  
As if they already stood aghast  
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,  
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.  
He heard the bleating of the flock,  
And the twitter of birds among the trees,  
And felt the breath of the morning breeze  
Blowing over the meadows brown.  
And one was safe and asleep in his bed

Who at the bridge would be first to fall,  
Who that day would be lying dead,  
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,  
How the British Regulars fired and fled  
How the farmers gave them ball for ball, From  
behind each fence and farmyard-wall, Chasing  
the red-coats down the lane,  
Then crossing the fields to emerge again  
Under the trees at the turn of the road,  
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;  
And so through the night went his cry of alarm  
To every Middlesex village and farm,  
A cry of defiance, and not of fear,  
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,  
And a word that shall echo forevermore!  
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,  
Through all our history, to the last,  
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,  
The people will waken and listen to hear  
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,  
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

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## LANGSTON HUGHES

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James Mercer Langston Hughes (February 1, 1901 – May 22, 1967) was an American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, and columnist. He was one of the earliest innovators of the then-new literary art form called jazz poetry and is best known for his work during the Harlem Renaissance. He famously wrote about the period that “the Negro was in vogue”, which was later paraphrased as “when Harlem was in vogue”. Hughes grew up in a series of Midwestern small towns and moved to New York City as a young man, where he made his career. He graduated from a high school in Cleveland, Ohio and soon began studies at Columbia University in New York City. He graduated from Lincoln University. In addition to writing poetry, Hughes wrote plays and short stories. He also published several non-fiction works. From 1942 to 1962, as the civil rights movement was gaining traction, he wrote an in-depth weekly column in a leading black newspaper, *The Chicago Defender*. Hughes died on May 22, 1967, at the age of 66.

## **DREAMS | Langston Hughes**

Hold fast to dreams  
For if dreams die  
Life is a broken-winged bird  
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams  
For when dreams go  
Life is a barren field  
Frozen with snow.

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## **MALCOLM COWLEY**

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Malcolm Cowley (August 24, 1898 –March 27, 1989) was an American writer, editor, historian, poet, and literary critic. He is best known for his first book of poetry, *Blue Juniata* (1929), and his memoir, *Exile's Return* (1934). Cowley was associated with the Lost Generation and was a prominent figure of the Harlem Renaissance. He also served as an influential editor and talent scout at Viking Press.

## THE LONG VOYAGE | Malcolm Cowley

Not that the pines were darker there,  
nor mid-May dogwood brighter there,  
nor swifts more swift in summer air;  
it was my own country,

having its thunderclap of spring,  
its long midsummer ripening,  
its corn hoar-stiff at harvesting,  
almost like any country,

yet being mine; its face, its speech,  
its hills bent low within my reach,  
its river birch and upland beech  
were mine, of my own country.

Now the dark waters at the bow  
fold back, like earth against the plow;  
foam brightens like the dogwood now  
at home, in my own country.











