

**#254 ("Hope' is the thing with feathers –")  
by Emily Dickinson**

"Hope" is the thing with feathers –  
That perches in the soul –  
And sings the tune without the words –  
And never stops – at all –

And sweetest – in the Gale – is heard –  
And sore must be the storm –  
That could abash the little Bird  
That kept so many warm –

I've heard it in the chilliest land –  
And on the strangest Sea –  
Yet, never, in Extremity,  
It asked a crumb – of Me.

**Invictus  
by William Ernest Henley**

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.

**The Kraken  
by Alfred Lord Tennyson**

Below the thunders of the upper deep,  
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,  
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep  
The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sunlights flee  
About his shadowy sides; above him swell  
Huge sponges of millennial growth and height;  
And far away into the sickly light,  
From many a wondrous grot and secret cell  
Unnumbered and enormous polypi  
Winnow with giant arms the slumbering green.  
There hath he lain for ages, and will lie  
Battening upon huge sea worms in his sleep,  
Until the latter fire shall heat the deep;  
Then once by man and angels to be seen,  
In roaring he shall rise and on the surface die.

**Warm Summer Sun  
BY MARK TWAIN**

Warm summer sun,  
Shine kindly here,  
Warm southern wind,  
Blow softly here.  
Green sod above,  
Lie light, lie light.  
Good night, dear heart,  
Good night, good night.

**Minstrel Man**  
by Langston Hughes

Because my mouth  
Is wide with laughter  
And my throat  
Is deep with song,  
You do not think  
I suffer after  
I have held my pain  
So long?

Because my mouth  
Is wide with laughter,  
You do not hear  
My inner cry?  
Because my feet  
Are gay with dancing,  
You do not know  
I die?

**Danse Russe**  
by William Carlos Williams

If I when my wife is sleeping  
and the baby and Kathleen  
are sleeping  
and the sun is a flame-white disc  
in silken mists  
above shining trees,—  
if I in my north room  
dance naked, grotesquely  
before my mirror  
waving my shirt round my head  
and singing softly to myself:  
"I am lonely, lonely.  
I was born to be lonely,  
I am best so!"  
If I admire my arms, my face,  
my shoulders, flanks, buttocks  
against the yellow drawn shades,—

Who shall say I am not  
the happy genius of my household?

**Speech to the Young : Speech to the Progress-Toward**  
by Gwendolyn Brooks

Say to them,  
say to the down-keepers,  
the sun-slappers,  
the self-soilers,  
the harmony-hushers,  
"even if you are not ready for day  
it cannot always be night."  
You will be right.  
For that is the hard home-run.

Live not for battles won.  
Live not for the-end-of-the-song.  
Live in the along.

**Luck**  
by Langston Hughes

Sometimes a crumb falls  
From the tables of joy,  
Sometimes a bone  
Is flung.

To some people  
Love is given,  
To others  
Only heaven.

**HERE DEAD WE LIE**  
by A E Housman

Here dead we lie  
Because we did not choose  
To live and shame the land  
From which we sprung.

Life, to be sure,  
Is nothing much to lose,  
But young men think it is,  
And we were young.

**The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner**  
by Randall Jarrell

From my mother's sleep I fell into the State,  
And I hunched in its belly till my wet fur froze.  
Six miles from earth, loosed from the dream of life,  
I woke to black flak and the nightmare fighters.  
When I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose.

**Fog**  
**by Carl Sandburg**

The fog comes  
on little cat feet  
It sits looking  
over harbour and sky  
on silent haunches  
and then moves on

**We Real Cool**  
**by Gwendolyn Brooks**

THE POOL PLAYERS.  
SEVEN AT THE GOLDEN SHOVEL.

We real cool. We  
Left school. We

Lurk late. We  
Strike straight. We

Sing sin. We  
Thin gin. We

Jazz June. We  
Die soon.

**I Love You**  
**by Sara Teasdale**

When April bends above me  
And finds me fast asleep,  
Dust need not keep the secret  
A live heart died to keep.

When April tells the thrushes,  
The meadow-larks will know,  
And pipe the three words lightly  
To all the winds that blow.

Above his roof the swallows,  
In notes like far-blown rain,  
Will tell the little sparrow  
Beside his window-pane.

O sparrow, little sparrow,  
When I am fast asleep,  
Then tell my love the secret  
That I have died to keep.

**When You Are Old**  
**by William Butler Yeats**

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,  
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,  
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look  
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,  
And loved your beauty with love false or true,  
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,  
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,  
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled  
And paced upon the mountains overhead  
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

**Nothing Gold Can Stay**  
**by Robert Frost**

Nature's first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower;  
But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf.  
So Eden sank to grief,  
So dawn goes down to day.  
Nothing gold can stay.

**Dream Deferred**  
**by Langston Hughes**

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?  
Or fester like a sore--  
And then run?  
Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over--  
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags  
like a heavy load.

*Or does it explode?*

**Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening**  
by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village, though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it's queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there's some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

**The Road Not Taken**  
by Robert Frost

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

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

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

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

**In A Station of the Metro**  
by Ezra Pound

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;  
Petals on a wet, black bough.

**The Cathedral Is**  
by John Ashbery

Slated for demolition.

**Fire and Ice**  
by Robert Frost

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

**Dreams**  
by 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.

**You Fit Into Me**  
by Margaret Atwood

you fit into me  
like a hook into an eye

a fish hook  
an open eye

**First Memory**  
by Louise Glück

Long ago, I was wounded. I lived  
to revenge myself  
against my father, not  
for what he was—  
for what I was: from the beginning of time,  
in childhood, I thought  
that pain meant  
I was not loved.  
It meant I loved.

**My Papa's Waltz**  
by Theodore Roethke

The whiskey on your breath  
Could make a small boy dizzy;  
But I hung on like death:  
Such waltzing was not easy.

We romped until the pans  
Slid from the kitchen shelf;  
My mother's countenance  
Could not unfrown itself.

The hand that held my wrist  
Was battered on one knuckle;  
At every step you missed  
My right ear scraped a buckle.

You beat time on my head  
With a palm caked hard by dirt,  
Then waltzed me off to bed  
Still clinging to your shirt.

**Poem**  
by Frank O'Hara

Lana Turner has collapsed!  
I was trotting along and suddenly  
it started raining and snowing  
and you said it was hailing  
but hailing hits you on the head  
hard so it was really snowing and  
raining and I was in such a hurry  
to meet you but the traffic  
was acting exactly like the sky  
and suddenly I see a headline  
LANA TURNER HAS COLLAPSED!  
there is no snow in Hollywood  
there is no rain in California  
I have been to lots of parties  
and acted perfectly disgraceful  
but I never actually collapsed  
oh Lana Turner we love you get up

**I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing**  
by Walt Whitman

I saw in Louisiana a live-oak growing,  
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the branches,  
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous leaves of dark green,  
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of myself,  
But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing alone there without  
its friend near, for I knew I could not,  
And I broke off a twig with a certain number of leaves upon it, and twined  
around it a little moss,  
And brought it away, and I have placed it in sight in my room,  
It is not needed to remind me as of my own dear friends,  
(For I believe lately I think of little else than of them,)  
Yet it remains to me a curious token, it makes me think of manly  
love;  
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in Louisiana  
solitary in a wide flat space,  
Uttering joyous leaves all its life without a friend a lover near,  
I know very well I could not.

**There Will Come Soft Rains**  
by Sara Teasdale

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,  
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,  
And wild plum trees in tremulous white;

Robins will wear their feathery fire,  
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one  
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,  
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn  
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

**The Runner**  
by Walt Whitman

On a flat road runs the well-train'd runner;  
He is lean and sinewy, with muscular legs;  
He is thinly clothed--he leans forward as he runs,  
With lightly closed fists, and arms partially rais'd.

**To See a World in a Grain of Sand**  
by William Blake

To see a world in a grain of sand  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand  
And eternity in an hour.

**The Sloth**  
by Theodore Roethke

In moving-slow he has no Peer.  
You ask him something in his Ear,  
He thinks about it for a Year;

And, then, before he says a Word  
There, upside down (unlike a Bird),  
He will assume that you have Heard—

A most Ex-as-per-at-ing Lug.  
But should you call his manner Smug,  
He'll sigh and give his Branch a Hug;

Then off again to Sleep he goes,  
Still swaying gently by his Toes,  
And you just know he knows he knows.

**Musée des Beaux Arts**  
by W. H. Auden

About suffering they were never wrong,  
The Old Masters: how well they understood  
Its human position; how it takes place  
While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking  
dully along;  
How when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting  
For the miraculous birth, there always must be  
Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating  
On a pond at the edge of the wood:  
They never forgot  
That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course  
Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot  
Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse  
Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.  
In Brueghel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away  
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may  
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,  
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone  
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green  
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen  
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,  
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

**Politics**  
by William Butler Yeats

*'In our time the destiny of man presents its meanings in political terms.'* -Thomas Mann

How can I, that girl standing there,  
My attention fix  
On Roman or on Russian  
Or on Spanish politics?  
Yet here's a travelled man that knows  
What he talks about,  
And there's a politician  
That has both read and thought,  
And maybe what they say is true  
Of war and war's alarms,  
But O that I were young again  
And held her in my arms.

**Anthem for Doomed Youth**  
by Wilfred Owen

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?  
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.  
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle  
Can patter out their hasty orisons.  
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;  
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,  
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;  
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.  
What candles may be held to speed them all?  
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes  
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.  
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;  
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,  
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

**This Is Just To Say**  
by William Carlos Williams

I have eaten  
the plums  
that were in  
the icebox  
and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for breakfast

Forgive me  
they were delicious  
so sweet  
and so cold

**On My First Son**  
by Ben Jonson

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;  
My sin was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy.  
Seven years thou'wert lent to me, and I thee pay,  
Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.  
O, could I lose all father now! For why  
Will man lament the state he should envy?  
To have so soon 'scap'd world's and flesh's rage,  
And, if no other misery, yet age?  
Rest in soft peace, and, ask'd, say here doth lie  
Ben Jonson his best piece of poetry.  
For whose sake, henceforth, all his vows be such,  
As what he loves may never like too much.