

Poetry's Greatest Hits:
Public-Domain Poems



Selected by David Bruce

Cover: John Donne

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1. To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time

By Robert Herrick

**Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles today
Tomorrow will be dying.**

**The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.**

**That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.**

**Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may forever tarry.**

Note: At the time the author wrote, “coy” meant “shy.”

2. "To His Coy Mistress"

By Andrew Marvell

Had we but world enough and time,
 This coyness, lady, were no crime.
 We would sit down, and think which way
 To walk, and pass our long love's day.
 Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
 Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
 Of Humber would complain. I would
 Love you ten years before the flood,
 And you should, if you please, refuse
 Till the conversion of the Jews.
 My vegetable love should grow
 Vaster than empires and more slow;
 An hundred years should go to praise
 Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
 Two hundred to adore each breast,
 But thirty thousand to the rest;
 An age at least to every part,
 And the last age should show your heart.
 For, lady, you deserve this state,
 Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
 Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near;
 And yonder all before us lie
 Deserts of vast eternity.
 Thy beauty shall no more be found;
 Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
 My echoing song; then worms shall try
 That long-preserved virginity,
 And your quaint honour turn to dust,
 And into ashes all my lust;

**The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.**

**Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapped power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life:
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.**

Notes:

At the time the author wrote, "coy" meant "shy."

**At the time the author wrote, one meaning of "mistress"
is "a woman who is loved."**

"Slow-chapped" means "slowly chewing."

3. 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.**

4. SONNET 130

By William Shakespeare

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

Note: In Shakespeare's day, "reek" meant "exhale" much more than it meant "stink."

5. Loveliest of Trees, the Cherry Now

By A.E. Housman

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my three score years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

6. To an Athlete Dying Young

By A.E. Housman

The time you won your town the race
 We chaired you through the market-place;
 Man and boy stood cheering by,
 And home we brought you shoulder-high.

To-day, the road all runners come,
 Shoulder-high we bring you home,
 And set you at your threshold down,
 Townsman of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
 From fields where glory does not stay,
 And early though the laurel grows
 It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
 Cannot see the record cut,
 And silence sounds no worse than cheers
 After earth has stopped the ears:

Now you will not swell the rout
 Of lads that wore their honours out,
 Runners whom renown outran
 And the name died before the man.

So set, before the echoes fade,
 The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
 And hold to the low lintel up
 The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head
 Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,

**And find unwithered on its curls
The garland briefer than a girl's.**

7. Terence, This is Stupid Stuff

By A.E. Housman

‘Terence, this is stupid stuff:
 You eat your victuals fast enough;
 There’s nothing much amiss, ’tis clear,
 To see the rate you drink your beer.
 But oh, good Lord, the verse you make,
 It gives a chap the belly-ache.
 The cow, the old cow, she is dead;
 It sleeps well, the hornéd head:
 We poor lads, ’tis our turn now
 To hear such tunes as killed the cow.
 Pretty friendship ’tis to rhyme
 Your friends to death before their time
 Moping melancholy mad:
 Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad.’

Why, if ’tis dancing you would be,
 There’s brisker pipes than poetry.
 Say, for what were hop-yards meant,
 Or why was Burton built on Trent?
 Oh many a peer of England brews
 Livelier liquor than the Muse,
 And malt does more than Milton can
 To justify God’s ways to man.
 Ale, man, ale’s the stuff to drink
 For fellows whom it hurts to think:
 Look into the pewter pot
 To see the world as the world’s not.
 And faith, ’tis pleasant till ’tis past:
 The mischief is that ’twill not last.
 Oh I have been to Ludlow fair
 And left my necktie God knows where,
 And carried halfway home, or near,

**Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer:
 Then the world seemed none so bad,
 And I myself a sterling lad;
 And down in lovely muck I've lain,
 Happy till I woke again.
 Then I saw the morning sky:
 Heigho, the tale was all a lie;
 The world, it was the old world yet,
 I was I, my things were wet,
 And nothing now remained to do
 But begin the game anew.**

**Therefore, since the world has still
 Much good, but much less good than ill,
 And while the sun and moon endure
 Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,
 I'd face it as a wise man would,
 And train for ill and not for good.
 'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale
 Is not so brisk a brew as ale:
 Out of a stem that scored the hand
 I wrung it in a weary land.
 But take it: if the smack is sour
 The better for the embittered hour;
 It will do good to heart and head
 When your soul is in my soul's stead;
 And I will friend you, if I may,
 In the dark and cloudy day.**

**There was a king reigned in the East:
 There, when kings will sit to feast,
 They get their fill before they think
 With poisoned meat and poisoned drink.
 He gathered all that sprang to birth
 From the many-venomed earth;
 First a little, thence to more,**

He sampled all her killing store;
And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,
Sate the king when healths went round.
They put arsenic in his meat
And stared aghast to watch him eat;
They poured strychnine in his cup
And shook to see him drink it up:
They shook, they stared as white's their shirt:
Them it was their poisoning hurt.
— I tell the tale that I heard told.
Mithridates, he died old.

8. Success is Counted Sweetest

By Emily Dickinson

**Success is counted sweetest
By those who ne'er succeed.
To comprehend a nectar
Requires sorest need.**

**Not one of all the purple host
Who took the flag to-day
Can tell the definition,
So clear, of victory!**

**As he, defeated, dying,
On whose forbidden ear
The distant strains of triumph
Burst agonized and clear!**

9. Dying

By Emily Dickinson

I heard a Fly buzz — when I died —
The Stillness in the Room
Was like the Stillness in the Air —
Between the Heaves of Storm —

The Eyes around — had wrung them dry —
And Breaths were gathering firm
For that last Onset — when the King
Be witnessed — in the Room —

I willed my Keepsakes — Signed away
What portion of me be
Assignable — and then it was
There interposed a Fly —

With Blue — uncertain — stumbling Buzz —
Between the light — and me —
And then the Windows failed — and then
I could not see to see —

10. "Because I Could Not Stop for Death"**By Emily Dickinson**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Note: A tippet is a shawl.

11. Kubla Khan

By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
 A stately pleasure-dome decree:
 Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
 Through caverns measureless to man
 Down to a sunless sea.
 So twice five miles of fertile ground
 With walls and towers were girdled round:
 And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
 Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
 And here were forests ancient as the hills,
 Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

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

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

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

12. On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

By John Keats

**Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific, and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise,
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.**

13. *Dulce et Decorum Est*

By Wilfred Edward Salter Owen

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

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

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

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
 Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
 And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
 His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin,
 If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
 Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs
 Bitter as the cud
 Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,--
 My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
 To children ardent for some desperate glory,
 The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
Pro patria mori.

Note: *Dulce et decorum est / Pro patria mori* means “It is sweet and fitting to die for one’s country.”

14. Base Details

By Siegfried Loraine Sassoon

If I were fierce, and bald, and short of breath,
I'd live with scarlet Majors at the Base,
And speed glum heroes up the line to death.
You'd see me with my puffy petulant face,
Guzzling and gulping in the best hotel,
Reading the Roll of Honour. "Poor young chap,"
I'd say — "I used to know his father well;
Yes, we've lost heavily in this last scrap."
And when the war is done and youth stone dead,
I'd toddle safely home and die — in bed.

15. First Fig

By Edna St. Vincent Millay

**My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends —
It gives a lovely light!**

16. Petit, the Poet

By Edgar Lee Masters

Seeds in a dry pod, tick, tick, tick,
 Tick, tick, tick, like mites in a quarrel—
 Faint iambics that the full breeze wakens—
 But the pine tree makes a symphony thereof.
 Triolets, villanelles, rondels, rondeaus,
 Ballades by the score with the same old thought:
 The snows and the roses of yesterday are vanished;
 And what is love but a rose that fades?
 Life all around me here in the village:
 Tragedy, comedy, valor and truth,
 Courage, constancy, heroism, failure—
 All in the loom, and oh what patterns!
 Woodlands, meadows, streams and rivers—
 Blind to all of it all my life long.
 Triolets, villanelles, rondels, rondeaus,
 Seeds in a dry pod, tick, tick, tick,
 Tick, tick, tick, what little iambics,
 While Homer and Whitman roared in the pines?

Note: This poem was published in *Spoon River
 Anthology* in 1916.

17. Lao-Tzu: *Tao Te Ching* 64

A Translation for the Public Domain by J. H.
McDonald, 1996

Things are easier to control while things are quiet.
Things are easier to plan far in advance.
Things break easier while they are still brittle.
Things are easier hid while they are still small.

Prevent problems before they arise.
Take action before things get out of hand.
The tallest tree
begins as a tiny sprout.
The tallest building
starts with one shovel of dirt.
A journey of a thousand miles
starts with a single footstep.

If you rush into action, you will fail.
If you hold on too tight, you will lose your grip.

Therefore the Master lets things take their course
and thus never fails.
She doesn't hold on to things
and never loses them.
By pursuing your goals too relentlessly,
you let them slip away.
If you are as concerned about the outcome
as you are about the beginning,
then it is hard to do things wrong.
The master seeks no possessions.
She learns by unlearning,
thus she is able to understand all things.
This gives her the ability to help all of creation.

Source:

<http://www.wright-house.com/religions/taoism/tao-te-ching.html#64>

18. Ozymandias

By Percy Bysshe Shelley

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

19. The Lamb (from *Songs of Innocence*)**By William Blake**

**Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, & bid thee feed
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, wooly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?**

**Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb.
He is meek, & he is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child, & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!**

20. The Tyger (from *Songs of Experience*)**By William Blake**

**Tyger! Tyger! burning bright,
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?**

**In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare sieze the fire?**

**And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?**

**What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?**

**When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?**

**Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?**

21. The Chimney Sweeper (from *Songs of Innocence*)

By William Blake

When my mother died I was very young,
 And my father sold me while yet my tongue
 Could scarcely cry ‘weep! ‘weep! ‘weep! ‘weep!
 So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There’s little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
 That curled like a lamb’s back, was shaved: so I said,
 “Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head’s bare,
 You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.”

And so he was quiet; and that very night,
 As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight, —
 That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
 Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel who had a bright key,
 And he opened the coffins and set them all free;
 Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they run,
 And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
 They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind;
 And the angel told Tom, if he’d be a good boy,
 He’d have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark,
 And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
 Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and
 warm;
 So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

22. The Chimney Sweeper (from *Songs of Experience*)**By William Blake**

**A little black thing among the snow,
Crying “weep! ‘weep!” in notes of woe!
“Where are thy father & mother? Say!”
“They are both gone up to the church to pray.**

**“Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil’d among the winter’s snow,
They clothed me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.**

**“And because I am happy & dance & sing,
They think they have done me no injury,
And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King,
Who make up a heaven of our misery.”**

23. On the Vanity of Earthly Greatness

By Arthur Guiterman

**The tusks which clashed in mighty brawls
Of mastodons, are billiard balls.**

**The sword of Charlemagne the Just
Is Ferric Oxide, known as rust.**

**The grizzly bear, whose potent hug,
Was feared by all, is now a rug.**

**Great Caesar's bust is on the shelf,
And I don't feel so well myself.**

24. Ulysses

By Alfred, Lord Tennyson

It little profits that an idle king,
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
 Life to the lees; all times I have enjoy'd
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
 That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
 Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
 For always roaming with a hungry heart
 Much have I seen and known; cities of men
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,
 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy,
 I am a part of all that I have met;
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
 For ever and for ever when I move.
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
 Were all too little, and of one to me
 Little remains: but every hour is saved
 From that eternal silence, something more,
 A bringer of new things; and vile it were
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
 And this gray spirit yearning in desire

To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the scepter and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with
me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,

**And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.**

25. The Man He Killed

By Thomas Hardy

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

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

“I shot him dead because —
Because he was my foe,
Just so: my foe of course he was;
That’s clear enough; although

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

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

Notes:

A nipperkin is a small cup of an alcoholic drink such as
beer.

Traps are personal belongings.
Half a crown is British money.

26. There is no Frigate like a Book**By Emily Dickinson**

**There is no Frigate like a Book
To take us Lands away
Nor any Coursers like a Page
Of prancing Poetry —
This Traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of Toll —
How frugal is the Chariot
That bears the Human Soul —**

27. Stars, I Have Seen Them Fall**By A.E. Housman**

**Stars, I have seen them fall,
But when they drop and die
No star is lost at all
From all the star-sown sky.
The toil of all that be
Helps not the primal fault;
It rains into the sea,
And still the sea is salt.**

28. On Moonlit Heath and Lonesome Bank

By A.E. Housman

On moonlit heath and lonesome bank
 The sheep beside me graze;
 And yon the gallows used to clank
 Fast by the four cross ways.

A careless shepherd once would keep
 The flocks by moonlight there,
 And high amongst the glimmering sheep
 The dead man stood on air.

They hang us now in Shrewsbury jail:
 The whistles blow forlorn,
 And trains all night groan on the rail
 To men that die at morn.

There sleeps in Shrewsbury jail to-night,
 Or wakes, as may betide,
 A better lad, if things went right,
 Than most that sleep outside.

And naked to the hangman's noose
 The morning clocks will ring
 A neck God made for other use
 Than strangling in a string.

And sharp the link of life will snap,
 And dead on air will stand
 Heels that held up as straight a chap
 As treads upon the land.

So here I'll watch the night and wait
 To see the morning shine,

**When he will hear the stroke of eight
And not the stroke of nine;**

**And wish my friend as sound a sleep
As lads' I did not know,
That shepherded the moonlit sheep
A hundred years ago.**

Note: "Keeping sheep by moonlight" means "hanging in chains."

29. When I was One-and-Twenty**By A.E. Housman**

**When I was one-and-twenty
I heard a wise man say,
'Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
But keep your fancy free.'
But I was one-and-twenty
No use to talk to me.**

**When I was one-and-twenty
I heard him say again,
'The heart out of the bosom
Was never given in vain;
'Tis paid with sighs a plenty
And sold for endless rue.'
And I am two-and-twenty
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.**

30. Casey at the Bat

By Ernest Lawrence Thayer

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that
 day:
 The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to
 play.
 And then when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did
 the same,
 A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair.
 The rest clung to that hope which springs eternal in the
 human breast;
 They thought, if only Casey could get but a whack at
 that —
 We'd put up even money, now, with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
 And the former was a lulu and the latter was a cake;
 So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
 For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to
 the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
 And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the
 ball;
 And when the dust had lifted, and the men saw what
 had occurred,
 There was Jimmy safe at second and Flynn a-hugging
 third.

Then from 5,000 throats and more there rose a lusty
 yell;
 It rumbled through the valley, it rattled in the dell;

**It knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the
flat,
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.**

**There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his
place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing and a smile on
Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed
his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the
bat.**

**Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands
with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them
on his shirt.
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his
hip,
Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's
lip.**

**And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling
through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur
there.
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped—
"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the
umpire said.**

**From the benches, black with people, there went up a
muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and
distant shore.
"Kill him! Kill the umpire!" shouted someone on the
stand;**

And it's likely they'd a-killed him had not Casey raised
his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage
shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid
flew;
But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, "Strike
two."

"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and echo
answered fraud;
But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was
awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his
muscles strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by
again.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lip, his teeth are
clenched in hate;
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it
go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's
blow.

Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining
bright;
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts
are light,
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere
children shout;
But there is no joy in Mudville — mighty Casey has
struck out.

31. A Visit from Saint Nicholas

By Clement Clark Moore

‘Twas the night before Christmas, when all thro’ the
house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar plums danc’d in their heads,
And Mama in her ‘kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter’s nap —
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters, and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new fallen snow,
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below;
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny rein-deer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and call’d them by name:
“Now! Dasher, now! Dancer, now! Prancer and Vixen,
“On! Comet, on! Cupid, on! Donder and Blitzen;
“To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!
“Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!”
As dry leaves before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys — and St. Nicholas too:
And then in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,

Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound:
He was dress'd all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnish'd with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys was flung on his back,
And he look'd like a peddler just opening his pack:
His eyes — how they twinkled! His dimples: how merry,
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry;
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face, and a little round belly
That shook when he laugh'd, like a bowl full of jelly:
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laugh'd when I saw him in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And fill'd all the stockings; then turn'd with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprung to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew, like the down of a thistle:
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight —
“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night.”

32. The 23rd Psalm (King James Version)

**The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His
name's sake.**

**Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death,
I will fear no evil: For thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of
mine enemies;
Thou annointest my head with oil; My cup runneth
over.**

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life,
and I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever.**

33. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (To Everything There Is A Season)

By Solomon

**To everything there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heavens:**

**A time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is
planted;**

**A time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;**

**A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;**

**A time to cast away stones,
and a time to gather stones together;**

**a time to embrace,
and a time to refrain from embracing;**

**A time to get, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;**

**A time to rend, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;**

**A time to love, and a time to hate;
a time of war, and a time of peace.**

34. Helen of Troy (from *Doctor Faustus*)**By Christopher Marlowe**

**Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss...
Her lips suck forth my soul; see where it flies!— ...
Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hapless Semele:
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azured arms:
And none but thou shalt be my paramour.**

Note: "Ilium" is another name for Troy.

35. The Charge of the Light Brigade

By Alfred, Lord Tennyson

I

**Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
“Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!” he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.**

II

**“Forward, the Light Brigade!”
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
Someone had blundered.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.**

III

**Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.**

IV

Flashed all their sabres bare,
 Flashed as they turned in air
 Sabring the gunners there,
 Charging an army, while
 All the world wondered.
 Plunged in the battery-smoke
 Right through the line they broke;
 Cossack and Russian
 Reeled from the sabre stroke
 Shattered and sundered.
 Then they rode back, but not
 Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon behind them
 Volleyed and thundered;
 Stormed at with shot and shell,
 While horse and hero fell.
 They that had fought so well
 Came through the jaws of Death,
 Back from the mouth of hell,
 All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade?
 O the wild charge they made!
 All the world wondered.
 Honour the charge they made!
 Honour the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred!

36. Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam #11

(Translated by Edward FitzGerald)

**Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.**

Notes:

**A rubaiyat (an Arabic word) is a long poem written in
quatrains that employ the rhyme scheme aaba.**

“Enow” equals “enough.”

37. How Do I Love Thee? Let Me Count the Ways**(Sonnets from the Portuguese: XLIII)****By Elizabeth Barrett Browning**

**How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.**

38. Trees**By Joyce Kilmer**

**I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.**

**A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;**

**A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;**

**A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;**

**Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.**

**Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.**

**Note: The poet's full name is Alfred Joyce Kilmer
(1886-1918).**

39. Decalogue

By Ambrose Bierce

Thou shalt no God but me adore:
'Twere too expensive to have more.

No images nor idols make
For Roger Ingersoll to break.

Take not God's name in vain: select
A time when it will have effect.

Work not on Sabbath days at all,
But go to see the teams play ball.

Honor thy parents. That creates
For life insurance lower rates.

Kill not, abet not those who kill;
Thou shalt not pay thy butcher's bill.

Kiss not thy neighbor's wife, unless
Thine own thy neighbor doth caress.

Don't steal; thou'lt never thus compete
Successfully in business. Cheat.

Bear not false witness—that is low—
But "hear 'tis rumored so and so."

Covet thou naught that thou hast got
By hook or crook, or somehow, got.

40. Richard Cory**By Edwin Arlington Robinson**

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

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

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

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

41. Miniver Cheevy

By Edwin Arlington Robinson

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
He wept that he was ever born,
And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old
When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;
The vision of a warrior bold
Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
And dreamed, and rested from his labors;
He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
That made so many a name so fragrant;
He mourned Romance, now on the town,
And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
Albeit he had never seen one;
He would have sinned incessantly
Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace
And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
He missed the mediaeval grace
Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
But sore annoyed was he without it;

**Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
And thought about it.**

**Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
And kept on drinking.**

42. 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.

43. The Village Atheist**By Edgar Lee Masters**

This poem was included in the original 1915 edition of Spoon River Anthology.

**YE young debaters over the doctrine
Of the soul's immortality
I who lie here was the village atheist,
Talkative, contentious, versed in the arguments
Of the infidels. But through a long sickness
Coughing myself to death I read the
Upanishads and the poetry of Jesus.
And they lighted a torch of hope and intuition
And desire which the Shadow
Leading me swiftly through the caverns of darkness,
Could not extinguish.
Listen to me, ye who live in the senses
And think through the senses only:
Immortality is not a gift,
Immortality is an achievement;
And only those who strive mightily
Shall possess it.**

44. The Second Coming

By William Butler Yeats

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
 Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
 Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
 Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
 The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
 When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
 Troubles my sight: a waste of desert sand;
 A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
 A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
 Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
 Wind shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again but now I know
 That twenty centuries of stony sleep
 Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
 And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
 Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

Note: "The Second Coming" was published in *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* (1920).

45. To Helen**By Edgar Allan Poe**

**Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicean barks of yore
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.**

**On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome.**

**Lo, in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand,
Ah! Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!**

46. The Raven

By Edgar Allen Poe

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak
 and weary,
 Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten
 lore—
 While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a
 tapping,
 As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber
 door.
 “’Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my
 chamber door—
 Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
 And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon
 the floor.
 Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to
 borrow
 From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost
 Lenore—
 For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name
 Lenore—
 Nameless *here* for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple
 curtain
 Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt
 before;
 So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood
 repeating
 “’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
 door—

Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
 door;—
 This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no
 longer,
 “Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I
 implore;
 But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came
 rapping,
 And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my
 chamber door,
 That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened
 wide the door;—
 Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there
 wondering, fearing,
 Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to
 dream before;
 But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no
 token,
 And the only word there spoken was the whispered
 word, “Lenore?”
 This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the
 word, “Lenore!”—
 Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me
 burning,
 Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than
 before.
 “Surely,” said I, “surely that is something at my
 window lattice;
 Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery
 explore—

Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery
 explore;—
 'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt
 and flutter,
 In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of
 yore;
 Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped
 or stayed he;
 But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my
 chamber door—
 Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber
 door—
 Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into
 smiling,
 By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it
 wore,
 "Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said,
 "art sure no craven,
 Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the
 Nightly shore—
 Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's
 Plutonian shore!"
 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse
 so plainly,
 Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
 For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
 Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his
 chamber door—

Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his
 chamber door,
 With such name as “Nevermore.”

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke
 only
 That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did
 outpour.
 Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then he
 fluttered—
 Till I scarcely more than muttered “Other friends have
 flown before—
 On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have
 flown before.”
 Then the bird said “Nevermore.”

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
 “Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock and
 store
 Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful
 Disaster
 Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one
 burden bore—
 Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
 Of ‘Never—nevermore’.”

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
 Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and
 bust and door;
 Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
 Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of
 yore—
 What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous
 bird of yore
 Meant in croaking “Nevermore.”

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable
 expressing
 To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my
 bosom's core;
 This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease
 reclining
 On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light
 gloated o'er,
 But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light
 gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from
 an unseen censer
 Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the
 tufted floor.
 "Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these
 angels he hath sent thee
 Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of
 Lenore;
 Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost
 Lenore!"
 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird
 or devil!—
 Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee
 here ashore,
 Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land
 enchanted—
 On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I
 implore—
 Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I
 implore!"
 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird
 or devil!
 By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we
 both adore—
 Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant
 Aidenn,
 It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name
 Lenore—
 Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name
 Lenore.”
 Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I
 shrieked, upstarting—
 “Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s
 Plutonian shore!
 Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul
 hath spoken!
 Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my
 door!
 Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form
 from off my door!”
 Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, *still* is
 sitting
 On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber
 door;
 And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is
 dreaming,
 And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his
 shadow on the floor;
 And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on
 the floor
 Shall be lifted—nevermore!

47. The Bells

By Edgar Allan Poe

I

Hear the sledges with the bells —
 Silver bells!
 What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
 How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
 In the icy air of night!
 While the stars that oversprinkle
 All the heavens seem to twinkle
 With a crystalline delight;
 Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
 From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells —
 From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells —
 Golden bells!
 What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
 Through the balmy air of night
 How they ring out their delight!
 From the molten-golden notes,
 And all in tune,
 What a liquid ditty floats
 To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
 On the moon!
 Oh, from out the sounding cells
 What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
 How it swells!

How it dwells
 On the Future! — how it tells
 Of the rapture that impels
 To the swinging and the ringing
 Of the bells, bells, bells,
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells —
 To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III

Hear the loud alarm bells —
 Brazen bells!
 What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
 In the startled ear of night
 How they scream out their affright!
 Too much horrified to speak,
 They can only shriek, shriek,
 Out of tune,
 In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
 In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,
 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 With a desperate desire,
 And a resolute endeavor
 Now — now to sit or never,
 By the side of the pale-faced moon.
 Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
 What a tale their terror tells
 Of despair!
 How they clang, and clash, and roar!
 What a horror they outpour
 On the bosom of the palpitating air!
 Yet the ear it fully knows,
 By the twanging
 And the clanging,
 How the danger ebbs and flows;

Yet the ear distinctly tells,
 In the jangling
 And the wrangling,
 How the danger sinks and swells,
 By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells

—
 Of the bells,
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells —
 In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV

Hear the tolling of the bells —
 Iron bells!
 What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
 In the silence of the night,
 How we shiver with affright
 At the melancholy menace of their tone!
 For every sound that floats
 From the rust within their throats
 Is a groan.
 And the people — ah, the people —
 They that dwell up in the steeple,
 All alone,
 And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
 In that muffled monotone,
 Feel a glory in so rolling
 On the human heart a stone —
 They are neither man nor woman —
 They are neither brute nor human —
 They are Ghouls:
 And their king it is who tolls;
 And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
 Rolls
 A paean from the bells!

**And his merry bosom swells
With the paeon of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the paeon of the bells,
Of the bells —
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells —
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells —
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.**

48. "Is My Team Ploughing ..."

By A. E. Housman

**'Is my team ploughing,
That I was used to drive
And hear the harness jingle
When I was man alive?'**

**Ay, the horses trample,
The harness jingles now;
No change though you lie under
The land you used to plough.**

**'Is football playing
Along the river shore,
With lads to chase the leather,
Now I stand up no more?'**

**Ay, the ball is flying,
The lads play heart and soul;
The goal stands up, the keeper
Stands up to keep the goal.**

**'Is my girl happy,
That I thought hard to leave,
And has she tired of weeping
As she lies down at eve?'**

**Ay, she lies down lightly,
She lies not down to weep:
Your girl is well contented.
Be still, my lad, and sleep.**

**'Is my friend hearty,
Now I am thin and pine,**

**And has he found to sleep in
A better bed than mine?’**

**Yes, lad, I lie easy,
I lie as lads would choose;
I cheer a dead man’s sweetheart,
Never ask me whose.**

49. The Eagle**By Alfred, Lord Tennyson**

**He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, he stands.**

**The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.**

50. Fog

By Carl Sandburg

**The fog comes
On little cat feet**

**It sits looking
Over harbor and city
On silent haunches
And then moves on.**

51. Much Madness is Divinest Sense**By Emily Dickinson**

**Much Madness is divinest Sense —
To a discerning Eye —
Much Sense — the starkest Madness —
'Tis the Majority
In this, as All, prevail —
Assent — and you are sane —
Demur — you're straightway dangerous —
And handled with a Chain —**

52. Song: Go and Catch a Falling Star

By John Donne

Go and catch a falling star,
 Get with child a mandrake root,
 Tell me where all past years are,
 Or who cleft the devil's foot,
 Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
 Or to keep off envy's stinging,
 And find
 What wind
 Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be'st born to strange sights,
 Things invisible to see,
 Ride ten thousand days and nights,
 Till age snow white hairs on thee,
 Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me,
 All strange wonders that befell thee,
 And swear,
 No where
 Lives a woman true and fair.

If thou find'st one, let me know,
 Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
 Yet do not, I would not go,
 Though at next door we might meet,
 Though she were true, when you met her,
 And last, till you write your letter,
 Yet she
 Will be
 False, ere I come, to two, or three.

APPENDIX A: ABOUT THE AUTHOR

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine’s brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka “The Joker,” decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn’t been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don’t often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn’t let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor’s degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a Master of Arts degree in English and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy. Yes, I have my MAMA degree.

Currently, and for a long time to come (I eat fruits and veggies), I am spending my retirement writing books such as *Nadia Comaneci: Perfect 10*, *The Funniest People in Comedy*, *Homer’s Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*, and *William Shakespeare’s Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose*.

By the way, my sister Brenda Kennedy writes romances such as *A New Beginning* and *Shattered Dreams*.

APPENDIX B: SOME BOOKS BY DAVID BRUCE

Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature

Ben Jonson's The Alchemist: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Case is Altered: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Catiline's Conspiracy: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Devil is an Ass: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Epicene: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Every Man in His Humor: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humor: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Fountain of Self-Love, or Cynthia's Revels: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The New Inn: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Sejanus: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's The Staple of News: A Retelling

Ben Jonson's Volpone, or the Fox: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's Complete Plays: Retellings

Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Retellings of the 1604 A-Text and of the 1616 B-Text

Christopher Marlowe's Edward II: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's The Rich Jew of Malta: A Retelling

Christopher Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2: Retellings

Dante's Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Inferno: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose

Dante's Paradise: A Retelling in Prose

The Famous Victories of Henry V: A Retelling

From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica

George Peele: Five Plays Retold in Modern English

George Peele's The Arraignment of Paris: A Retelling

George Peele's The Battle of Alcazar: A Retelling

George's Peele's David and Bathsheba, and the Tragedy of Absalom: A Retelling

George's Peele's Edward I: A Retelling

George Peele's The Old Wives' Tale: A Retelling

George-A-Greene, The Pinner of Wakefield: A Retelling

The History of King Leir: A Retelling

Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose

Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose

Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica

The Jests of George Peele: A Retelling

John Ford: Eight Plays Translated into Modern English

John Ford's The Broken Heart: A Retelling

John Ford's The Fancies, Chaste and Noble: A Retelling

John Ford's The Lady's Trial: A Retelling

John Ford's The Lover's Melancholy: A Retelling

John Ford's Love's Sacrifice: A Retelling

John Ford's Perkin Warbeck: A Retelling

John Ford's The Queen: A Retelling

- John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Retelling*
- John Webster's The White Devil: A Retelling*
- King Edward III: A Retelling*
- The Merry Devil of Edmonton: A Retelling*
- Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay: A Retelling*
- The Taming of a Shrew: A Retelling*
- Tarlton's Jests: A Retelling*
- The Trojan War and Its Aftermath: Four Ancient Epic Poems*
- Virgil's Aeneid: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 5 Late Romances: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 10 Histories: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 11 Tragedies: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 12 Comedies: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 38 Plays: Retellings in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 2 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's 3 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 3: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's As You Like It: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors: A Retelling in Prose*

- William Shakespeare's Coriolanus: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Cymbeline: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Henry V: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Henry VIII: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's King John: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Othello: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Pericles, Prince of Tyre: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Richard II: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Richard III: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's The Tempest: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Timon of Athens: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus: A Retelling in Prose*
- William Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: A Retelling in Prose*

William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Two Gentlemen of Verona: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Two Noble Kinsmen: A Retelling in Prose

William Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale: A Retelling in Prose

Other Fiction

Candide's Two Girlfriends (Adult)

Honey Badger Goes to Hell — and Heaven

I Want to Die — Or Fight Back

The Erotic Adventures of Candide (Adult)

Children's Biography

Nadia Comaneci: Perfect Ten

Personal Finance

How to Manage Your Money: A Guide for the Non-Rich

Anecdote Collections

250 Anecdotes About Opera

250 Anecdotes About Religion

250 Anecdotes About Religion: Volume 2

250 Music Anecdotes

Be a Work of Art: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

Boredom is Anti-Life: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

The Coolest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in the Arts: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes

The Coolest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes

Create, Then Take a Break: 250 Anecdotes

Don't Fear the Reaper: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Books, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Books, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Dance: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 4: 250 Anecdotes

The Funniest People in Families, Volume 5: 250 Anecdotes

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The Funniest People in Music: 250 Anecdotes

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The Funniest People in Neighborhoods: 250 Anecdotes

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Maximum Cool: 250 Anecdotes

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Resist Psychic Death: 250 Anecdotes

Seize the Day: 250 Anecdotes and Stories

Discussion Guide Series

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Dante's Paradise: A Discussion Guide

Dante's Purgatory: A Discussion Guide

Forrest Carter's The Education of Little Tree: A Discussion Guide

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Mark Twain's The Prince and the Pauper: A Discussion Guide

Nancy Garden's Annie on My Mind: A Discussion Guide

Nicholas Sparks' A Walk to Remember: A Discussion Guide

Virgil's Aeneid: A Discussion Guide

Virgil's "The Fall of Troy": A Discussion Guide

Voltaire's Candide: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Discussion Guide

William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Discussion Guide

William Sleator's Oddballs: A Discussion Guide

