Poem of the Day

/lit/
2022

For Anon.

Contents

Preface xiii
Summary of Poets Featured xiv
Selection of 100 Poems xv
Best Poets Vote xvi
Votes Cast xvii
Poems 1
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening 2
Air and Angels 3
What Then? 4
'Twas such a little - little boat 5
Non Dolet 6
Respublica 7
Puritans 8
The Inn of Earth 9
Forgetfulness 10
Book Lover 11
Pedestrian 13
God's Grandeur 15
To Daffodils 16
Sonnet X: To Nothing Fitter 17
La Figlia che Piange 18
Composed upon Westminster Bridge 19
Let Dew The Flowers Fill 20
The Eagle 21
The Man He Killed 22

Into my heart an air that kills 23
The Spring 24
Psyche 25
Among the Rocks 26
Chaucer 27
A Daughter of Eve 28
Happy Is England! I Could Be Content 29
Grunge 30
Infanta Marina 31
A Hymn to God the Father 32
And The Days Are Not Full Enough 33
Good-Night 34
Sudden Light 35
The Oblation 36
Peace 37
No Second Troy 38
Siberia 39
Sonnet 1 41
So We'll Go No More a Roving 42
When I have Fears That I May Cease to Be 43
Greek Architecture 44
Fame is a bee 45
Break, Break, Break 46
To Lucasta, Going to the Wars 47
In a Station of the Metro 48
Ode on Solitude 49
A Slumber did my Spirit Seal 50
Morning at the Window 51
This Landscape Before Me 52
A Poison Tree 54
There Is Pleasure In The Pathless Woods 55
Adam's Apple 57
Bitter-Sweet 58
Interior Poem 59
Epitaph 60

Anthem for Doomed Youth 61
The Hollow Men I 62
The Hollow Men II & III 63
The Hollow Men IV & V 65
Crab 67
The Human Seasons 68
The Sonnet-Ballad 69
In Time of "The Breaking of Nations" 70
Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries 71
After the War 72
Festubert: The Old German Line 73
Spring 75
A Clear Midnight 76
A Girl 77
Immortality 78
If— 79
Come not when I am dead 81
In Piam Memoriam 82
Love Lies Bleeding 83
Life in a Love 84
"Soldier from the wars returning" 85
Laughing Song 86
The Sea-Shell 87
The Second Coming 88
"I Said to Love" 89
Beyond the Sea 91
A Song Of The Degrees 92
The Passionate Shepherd to His Love 93
The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd 94
Amoretti XXX: My Love is like to ice, and I to fire . 95
Prospice 96
I Hear an Army 97
"Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art" . . . 98
Mutability 99
The Lake Isle of Innisfree 100

Lines Written in Early Spring 101
Daisy Time 102
Sonnet 7: How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth 103
There is no Frigate like a Book (1286) 104
London 105
Love and Sleep 106
The Emperor of Ice-Cream 107
Song from a Country Fair 108
Lightness in Autumn 109
Inversnaid 110
Sound And Sense 111
The Convergence of the Twain 112
Ozymandias 114
Aedh Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven 115
I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud 116
O Captain! My Captain! 117
Remember 119
In Memory of Jane Fraser 120
Fire and Ice 121
Aftermath 122
To the Skylark 123
Paradoxes and Oxymorons 124
On Seeing the Elgin Marbles 125
Sonnet 18: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? 126
Thalassography 127
Sonnet 75 129
The Tyger 130
To a Marsh Hawk in Spring 131
Pied Beauty 132
Holy Sonnets: Death, be not proud 133
Sonnet 19: When I consider how my light is spent . . 134
Do not go gentle into that good night 135
She Walks in Beauty 136
Good-Night 137

Oswald Spengler Watches the Sunset 138
Stand Whoso List 139
The Mothering Blackness 140
Blackberry-Picking 141
Now Winter Nights Enlarge 142
Crossing the Bar 143
It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free 144
Immortal Sails 145
To His Coy Mistress 146
Holy Sonnets: Batter my heart, three-person'd God . 148
Beat! Beat! Drums! 149
Nothing Gold Can Stay 151
Astrophil and Stella 31: With how sad steps, O Moon 152
Arms and the Boy 153
Dreams 154
Happy the man 155
And death shall have no dominion 156
This Room 158
Ring Out Your Bells 159
Autumn Song 161
Storm on the Island 162
Sea Rose 163
At Melville's Tomb 164
A Dialogue between the Soul and the Body 165
The Enkindled Spring 167
Marching Men 168
Mediocrity in Love Rejected 169
Leda and the Swan 170
My prime of youth is but a frost of cares 171
The Doubt of Future Foes 172
I Am! 173
The Sick Rose 174
Retirement 175
Alone 176
To His Fairest Valentine, Mrs. A.L. 177

On my First Son 178
On My First Daughter 179
On the Grasshopper and Cricket 180
Dust of Snow 181
England in 1819 182
Farewell, ungrateful traitor! 183
The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter 184
The Pulley 186
Relic 187
Between Us Now 188
The Windhover 189
The Mother Of God 190
Work without Hope 191
Hard Times 192
The More Loving One 193
Because I could not stop for Death 194
A Dream Within a Dream 195
The Asians Dying 196
Valentine 197
An Arundel Tomb 198
When We Two Parted 200
Blow, Bugle, Blow 202
How Do I Love Thee? (Sonnet 43) 203
The Lost Leader 204
Hysteria 206
Sumer is icumin in 207
The World Is Too Much With Us 209
In Flanders Fields 210
A Red, Red Rose 211
The Destruction of Sennacherib 212
Dover Beach 213
On His Seventy-fifth Birthday 215
Ars Poetica 216
If I Could Tell You 218
The Mower to the Glow-Worms 219

To Celia 220
Sonnet 29: When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes 221
I felt a Funeral, in my Brain 222
At the round earth's imagined corners (Holy Sonnet 7) 223
Picture of a Nativity 224
A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London 225
Love's Philosophy 226
Miniver Cheevy 227
Virtue 229
She Was a Phantom of Delight 230
MCMXIV 232
The Return 234
Trees 235
Idea 6: How many paltry, foolish, painted things . . . 236
Spring, the sweet spring 237
Sonnet 116 238
First Love 239
Confessions 240
Choices 242
"The day is gone, and all its sweets are gone!" 243
The Flowers 244
Gascoigne's Lullaby 245
Jerusalem 247
"The ribs and terrors in the whale" 248
On the Cards and Dice 249
A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown 250
Sea-Fever 252
Do Not Stand At My Grave And Weep 253
Come, come thou bleak December wind 254
Requiem for the Croppies 255
Jabberwocky 256
One Art 258

Binsey Poplars 259
Nature is what we see 260
Dream Song 29 261
Early Death 262
Music when Soft Voices Die 263
The Voice 264
Street Musicians 265
Sonnet 94 266
Idea 61: Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part 267
Delight in Disorder 268
The Character of a Happy Life 269
There Will Come Soft Rains 270
Anecdote of the Jar 271
This is my play's last scene (Holy Sonnet 6) 272
The Virgin 273
Invictus 274
These Are The Clouds 275
All Things will Die 276
Spring and Fall 278
There's a certain Slant of light 279
The Apparition 280
For A Picture 281
A Broken Appointment 282
Lines on Cambridge of 1830 283
Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace . . . 284
A Lament 285
A Farewell 286
Queen 287
A Child's Laughter 289
To an Athlete Dying Young 291
Hunt & Night Spins in its Wake 293
Carnivorous 294
The Conqueror Worm 295
Amoretti: Sonnet 54 297
The Song of Wandering Aengus 298

Twelfth Song of Thunder 299
The Ecchoing Green 300
Sonnet 73: That time of year thou mayst in me behold 302
Loveliest of trees, the cherry now 303
The Beautiful Changes 304
To Autumn 305
Song of the Witchess 307
My Heart Leaps Up 308
To a Shade 309
The Air Plant 310
The Dying Christian to his Soul 311
A Song of a Young Lady to Her Ancient Lover 312
Sonnet 19: On His Blindness 313
Spleen 314
On the Sea 315
Solomon Grundy 316
For St. Jerome 317
The World Below the Brine 318
The Embankment 319
Insomnia 320
Sonnet 130: My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun 321
The Road Not Taken 322
They Flee From Me 323
The House of Life: 71. The Choice, I 324
Disillusionment of Ten O'Clock 325
September 1913 326
Adlestrop 328
As imperceptibly as Grief 329
A Glimpse 330
On Being Brought from Africa to America 331
After Death 332
Figs from Thistles: First Fig 333
This living hand, now warm and capable 334
Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota 335

Song to Amarantha, that she would Dishevel her Hair 336
From Clee to heaven the beacon burns 338
Bahnhofstrasse 340
Love Calls Us to the Things of This World 341
Autumn 343
The Definition of Love 344
The Swing 346
Token 347
Sonnet 65: Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea 348
Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to dust 349
Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird 350
Sundown 352
Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone 353
The Solitary Reaper 354
The Way Of The Wind 356
Ae Fond Kiss 357
Sonnet 104: To me, fair friend, you never can be old 358
Eternity 359
A blue anchor grains of grit in a tall sky sewing . . . 360
To Emily Dickinson 361
One Flesh 362
The Fair Singer 363
On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again . . . 364
Whatever Happened? 365
Piano 366
Song 367
Sea Love 368
The Owl and the Pussy-Cat 369
Fog 371
Lines: The cold earth slept below 372
Sonnet 97: How like a winter hath my absence been . 374
Dead Love 375
In Time of Plague 376
I've Been Roaming 378

Her Anxiety 379
Woman's Constancy 380
Oread 381
My Last Duchess 382
The Hawk in the Rain 384
The Snow Man 385
Remember Thee! Remember Thee! 386
In Romney Marsh 387
The Waking 389
Time does not bring relief; you all have lied 390
The Darkling Thrush 391
"Hope" is the thing with feathers 393
'Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend' 394
Meeting at Night 395
The Presence Of Love 396
Voyages III 397
Ode on a Grecian Urn 398
The Stolen Child 400
Here dead we lie because we did not choose 402
Dreams 403
Follow Thy Fair Sun 404
The Rain-bow 405
Mild is the Parting Year 406
Bright Star of Beauty 407
In drear nighted December 408
Tears, Idle Tears 409
Murdering Beauty 410
I have a Bird in spring 411
Strange Things Happen at Night 413
The Lamb 414
Christ's Nativity 415
Fan-Piece for Her Imperial Lord 417
Possible Answers to Prayer 418
If Thou Must Love Me 419
Year's End 420

Voices Of The Night : A Psalm Of Life 422
Sonnet 130: My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun 424

Preface

Please enjoy this selection of 365 short poems that were posted on /lit/ every day during 2022. For each poem, there is a link to the archived thread if you wish to read what other anons thought about the poem. Sometimes you may find thoughtful analysis and carefully written posts; sometimes you may find memes and jokes; sometimes just a stream of bumps. Sometimes, even, you may find that the thread was not archived as Warosu was down as was the case for the entire month of October. However, you are still encouraged to read the poem yourself, engage with it, and discover which sounds and images evoke feelings and thoughts into your heart and mind.

If you think you do not get poetry, perhaps you're reading too fast, perhaps you're glancing over the little bit of magic that hides behind the words, or perhaps the poem simply does not speak to you. For this reason, this document contains poems from all eras and styles, rhymed and unrhymed, romantic and modernist, gnomes and sonnets. One thing they do share in common is that they are all pretty short, in the hope that they can fit in your life regardless of how busy it is.

Other than this, thank you to all the anons who participated, shared their thoughts no matter how brief or detailed, bumped the threads, and supported the project throughout the year with their kind words and encouragement. I was not sure I would keep doing it for the entire year, but I am grateful for /lit/, so I hope this document helps new anons to get into poetry and continue supporting and promoting quality literature today and forever.

Summary of Poets Featured

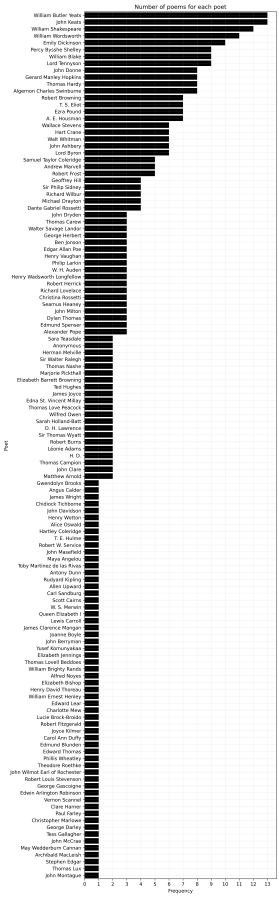

Figure 1: All poets featured in this book along with the number of works featured from each.

Selection of 100 Poems

Figure 2: This is a selection of best 100 poems/threads that can be used for rolling. In the document, there is a ✳above the poem to indicate if it is part of this selection.

Best Poets Vote

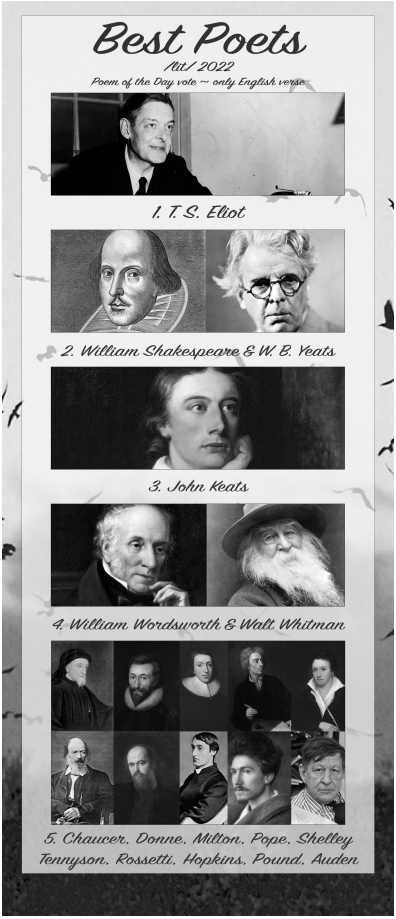

Figure 3: At the end of the year, we held a vote for the best poets according to /lit/. You can see all the votes in Table 1.

Votes Cast

12/23/2022 8:28:24	William Butler Yeats	Geoffrey Chaucer	Thomas Sterns Eliot	William Shakespeare	Alfred Tennyson
12/23/2022 9:48:08	Yeats	Rossetti (Dante)	Auden	Keats	Cavafy
12/23/2022 10:30:10	Keats	Shakespeare	Wordsworth	Hopkins	Geoffrey Hill
12/23/2022 14:34:13	John Keats	William Butler Yeats	William Shakespeare	John Donne	T. S. Eliot
12/23/2022 16:00:41	Ernest Dowson	T.E. Hulme	Alexander Pope	Clark Coolidge	Ezra Pound
12/23/2022 19:23:04	John Milton	T.S. Eliot	Walt Whitman		
12/23/2022 22:36:04	Ezra Pound	T. S. Eliot	W. B. Yeats	Walt Whitman	P. B. Shelley
12/24/2022 10:19:55	T. S. Eliot	William Wordsworth	William Blake		
12/24/2022 11:40:16	Emily Brontë	Gerard Manley Hopkins	William Wordsworth	The Gawain Poet	A.E. Housman
12/24/2022 16:40:48	Edgar Allen Poe	Percy Bysshe Shelley	Lord Byron	Shakespeare	Chaucer
12/24/2022 20:22:05	Robert Frost	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	Emily Dickinson	Walt Whitman	Jim Morrison
12/25/2022 6:24:14	Robert Browning	W. H. Auden	Philip Larkin	George Herbert	Andrew Marvell
12/25/2022 13:18:17	Joel Oppenheimer	Dylan Thomas	John Donne	W.B. Yeats	John Milton
12/25/2022 14:19:40	Alexander Pope	Alfred, Lord Tennyson	TS Eliot	William Shakespeare	
12/27/2022 16:10:06	T.S. Eliot	Hart Crane	W.B Yeats	John Keats	William Shakespeare
12/29/2022 13:31:24	walter de la mare	edna st. vincent millay	dante gabriel rossetti	swinburne	god bless you for doing the poetry threads, i check them every time i'm on /lit/ and even when i don't post i read the poem! merry christmas

Table 1: All the votes cast for the Best Poet poll.

Poems

✷

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Frost

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

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

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

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

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19668629

January 2

Air and Angels

John Donne

Twice or thrice had I lov'd thee,
Before I knew thy face or name;
So in a voice, so in a shapeless flame
Angels affect us oft, and worshipp'd be;
Still when, to where thou wert, I came,
Some lovely glorious nothing I did see.
But since my soul, whose child love is,
Takes limbs of flesh, and else could nothing do,
More subtle than the parent is
Love must not be, but take a body too;
And therefore what thou wert, and who,
I bid Love ask, and now
That it assume thy body, I allow,
And fix itself in thy lip, eye, and brow.

Whilst thus to ballast love I thought,
And so more steadily to have gone,
With wares which would sink admiration,
I saw I had love's pinnace overfraught;
Ev'ry thy hair for love to work upon
Is much too much, some fitter must be sought;
For, nor in nothing, nor in things
Extreme, and scatt'ring bright, can love inhere;
Then, as an angel, face, and wings
Of air, not pure as it, yet pure, doth wear,
So thy love may be my love's sphere;
Just such disparity
As is 'twixt air and angels' purity,
'Twixt women's love, and men's, will ever be.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19674036

January 3

What Then?

William Butler Yeats

His chosen comrades thought at school
He must grow a famous man;
He thought the same and lived by rule,
All his twenties crammed with toil;
'What then?' sang Plato's ghost. 'What then?'

Everything he wrote was read,
After certain years he won
Sufficient money for his need,
Friends that have been friends indeed;
'What then?' sang Plato's ghost. ' What then?'

All his happier dreams came true –
A small old house, wife, daughter, son,
Grounds where plum and cabbage grew,
poets and Wits about him drew;
'What then.?' sang Plato's ghost. 'What then?'

The work is done,' grown old he thought,
'According to my boyish plan;
Let the fools rage, I swerved in naught,
Something to perfection brought';
But louder sang that ghost, 'What then?'

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19680582

January 4

'Twas such a little - little boat

Emily Dickinson

'Twas such a little - little boat
That toddled down the bay!
'Twas such a gallant - gallant sea
That beckoned it away!

'Twas such a greedy, greedy wave
That licked it from the Coast -
Nor ever guessed the stately sails
My little craft was lost!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19686460

January 5

Non Dolet

Algernon Charles Swinburne

It does not hurt. She looked along the knife
Smiling, and watched the thick drops mix and run
Down the sheer blade; not that which had been done
Could hurt the sweet sense of the Roman wife,
But that which was to do yet ere the strife
Could end for each for ever, and the sun:
Nor was the palm yet nor was peace yet won
While pain had power upon her husband's life.

It does not hurt, Italia. Thou art more
Than bride to bridegroom; how shalt thou not take
The gift love's blood has reddened for thy sake?
Was not thy lifeblood given for us before?
And if love's heartblood can avail thy need,
And thou not die, how should it hurt indeed?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19693113

January 6

Respublica

Geoffrey Hill

The strident high
civic trumpeting
of misrule. It is
what we stand for.

Wild insolence,
aggregates without
distinction. Courage
of common men:

spent in the ruck
their remnant witness
after centuries
is granted them

like a pardon.
And other fealties
other fortitudes
broken as named—

Respublica
brokenly recalled,
its archaic laws
and hymnody;

and destroyed hope
that so many times
is brought with triumph
back from the dead.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19698793

January 7

✷

Puritans

Richard Wilbur

Sidling upon the river, the white boat
Has volleyed with its cannon all the morning,
Shaken the shore towns like a Judgment warning,
Telling the palsied water its demand
That the crime come to the top again, and float,
That the sunk murder rise to the light and land.

Blam! In the noon's perfected brilliance burn
Brief blooms of flame, which soil away in smoke;
And down below, where slowed concussion broke
The umber stroll of waters, water-dust
Dreamily powders up, and serves to turn
The river surface to a cloudy rust.

Down from his bridge the river captain cries
To fire again. They make the cannon sound;
But none of them would wish the murder found,
Nor wish in other manner to atone
Than booming at their midnight crime, which lies
Rotting the river, weighted with a stone.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19704786

January 8

✷

The Inn of Earth

Sara Teasdale

I came to the crowded Inn of Earth,
And called for a cup of wine,
But the Host went by with averted eye
From a thirst as keen as mine.

Then I sat down with weariness
And asked a bit of bread,
But the Host went by with averted eye
And never a word he said.

While always from the outer night
The waiting souls came in
With stifled cries of sharp surprise
At all the light and din.

"Then give me a bed to sleep," I said,
"For midnight comes apace"–
But the Host went by with averted eye
And I never saw his face.

"Since there is neither food nor rest,
I go where I fared before"–
But the Host went by with averted eye
And barred the outer door.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19710090

January 9

✷

Forgetfulness

Hart Crane

Forgetfulness is like a song
That, freed from beat and measure, wanders.
Forgetfulness is like a bird whose wings are reconciled,
Outspread and motionless, –
A bird that coasts the wind unwearyingly.

Forgetfulness is rain at night,
Or an old house in a forest, – or a child.
Forgetfulness is white, – white as a blasted tree,
And it may stun the sybil into prophecy,
Or bury the Gods.

I can remember much forgetfulness.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19715612

January 10

Book Lover

Robert W. Service

I keep collecting books I know
I'll never, never read;
My wife and daughter tell me so,
And yet I never head.
"Please make me," says some wistful tome,
"A wee bit of yourself."
And so I take my treasure home,
And tuck it in a shelf.

And now my very shelves complain;
They jam and over-spill.
They say: "Why don't you ease our strain?"
"some day," I say, "I will."
So book by book they plead and sigh;
I pick and dip and scan;
Then put them back, distrest that I
Am such a busy man.

Now, there's my Boswell and my Sterne,
my Gibbon and Defoe;
To savour Swift I'll never learn,
Montaigne I may not know.
On Bacon I will never sup,
For Shakespeare I've no time;
Because I'm busy making up
These jingly bits of rhyme.

Chekov is caviare to me,
While Stendhal makes me snore;
Poor Proust is not my cup of tea,
And Balzac is a bore.

I have their books, I love their names,
And yet alas! they head,
With Lawrence, Joyce and Henry James,
My Roster of Unread.

I think it would be very well
If I commit a crime,
And get put in a prison cell
And not allowed to rhyme;
Yet given all these worthy books
According to my need,
I now caress with loving looks,
But never, never read.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19721554

January 11

Pedestrian

Thomas Lux

Tottering and elastic, middle name of Groan,
ramfeezled after a hard night
at the corpse-polishing plant, slope-
shouldered, a half loaf
of bread, even his hair tired, famished,
fingering the diminished beans
in his pocket—you meet him.
On a thousand street corners you meet him,
emerging from the subway, emerging
from your own chest—this sight's shrill,
metallic vapors pass into you.
His fear is of being broken,
of becoming too dexterous in stripping
the last few shoelaces of meat
from a chicken's carcass, of being moved by nothing
short of the Fall of Rome, of being stooped
in the cranium over some loss he's forgotten
the anniversary of.... You meet him,
know his defeat, though proper
and inevitable, is not yours, although yours also
is proper and inevitable: so many defeats
queer and insignificant (as illustration:
the first time you lay awake all night
waiting for dawn—and were disappointed), so many
no-hope exhaustions hidden,
their gaze dully glazed inward.—And yet we all
fix our binoculars on the horizon's hazy fear-heaps
and cruise toward them, fat sails
forward.... You meet him on the corners,
in bus stations, on the blind avenues

leading neither in
nor out of hell, you meet him
and with him you walk.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19726792

January 12

✷

God's Grandeur

Gerard Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19732191

January 13

✷

To Daffodils

Robert Herrick

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19737970

January 14

Sonnet X: To Nothing Fitter

Michael Drayton

To nothing fitter can I thee compare
Than to the son of some rich penny-father,
Who, having now brought on his end with care,
Leaves to his son all he had heap'd together;
This new rich novice, lavish of his chest,
To one man gives, doth on another spend,
Then here he riots, yet among the rest
Haps to lend some to one true honest friend.
Thy gifts thou in obscurity dost waste,
False friends thy kindness, born but to deceive thee,
Thy love that is on the unworthy plac'd,
Time hath thy beauty, which with age will leave thee;
Only that little which to me was lent
I give thee back, when all the rest is spent.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19744229

January 15

✷

La Figlia che Piange

T. S. Eliot

O quam te memorem virgo ...

Stand on the highest pavement of the stair—
Lean on a garden urn—
Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair—
Clasp your flowers to you with a pained surprise—
Fling them to the ground and turn
With a fugitive resentment in your eyes:
But weave, weave the sunlight in your hair.

So I would have had him leave,
So I would have had her stand and grieve,
So he would have left
As the soul leaves the body torn and bruised,
As the mind deserts the body it has used.
I should find
Some way incomparably light and deft,
Some way we both should understand,
Simple and faithless as a smile and shake of the hand.

She turned away, but with the autumn weather
Compelled my imagination many days,
Many days and many hours:
Her hair over her arms and her arms full of flowers.
And I wonder how they should have been together!
I should have lost a gesture and a pose.
Sometimes these cogitations still amaze
The troubled midnight and the noon's repose.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19750006

January 16

✷

Composed upon Westminster Bridge

William Wordsworth

Earth has not any thing to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19755332

January 17

Let Dew The Flowers Fill

Thomas Lovell Beddoes

Let dew the flowers fill;
No need of fell despair,
Though to the grave you bear
One still of soul—but now too still,
One fair—but now too fair.
For, beneath your feet, the mound,
And the waves, that play around,
Have meaning in their grassy, and their watery, smiles;
And, with a thousand sunny wiles,
Each says, as he reproves,
Death's arrow oft is Love's.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19761443

January 18

The Eagle

Lord Tennyson

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

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

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19767019

January 19

✷

The Man He Killed

Thomas Hardy

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

"But ranged as infantry,
And staring face to face,
I shot at him 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."

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19772751

January 20

✷

Into my heart an air that kills

A. E. Housman

Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19778297

January 21

✷

The Spring

Thomas Carew

Now that the winter's gone, the earth hath lost
Her snow-white robes, and now no more the frost
Candies the grass, or casts an icy cream
Upon the silver lake or crystal stream;
But the warm sun thaws the benumbed earth,
And makes it tender; gives a sacred birth
To the dead swallow; wakes in hollow tree
The drowsy cuckoo, and the humble-bee.
Now do a choir of chirping minstrels bring
In triumph to the world the youthful Spring.
The valleys, hills, and woods in rich array
Welcome the coming of the long'd-for May.
Now all things smile, only my love doth lour;
Nor hath the scalding noonday sun the power
To melt that marble ice, which still doth hold
Her heart congeal'd, and makes her pity cold.
The ox, which lately did for shelter fly
Into the stall, doth now securely lie
In open fields; and love no more is made
By the fireside, but in the cooler shade
Amyntas now doth with his Chloris sleep
Under a sycamore, and all things keep
Time with the season; only she doth carry
June in her eyes, in her heart January.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19784238

January 22

✷

Psyche

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The butterfly the ancient Grecians made
The soul's fair emblem, and its only name–
But of the soul, escaped the slavish trade
Of mortal life! – For in this earthly frame
Ours is the reptile's lot, much toil, much blame,
Manifold motions making little speed,
And to deform and kill the things whereon we feed.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19789832

January 23

Among the Rocks

Robert Browning

Oh, good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,
This autumn morning! How he sets his bones
To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees and feet
For the ripple to run over in its mirth;
Listening the while, where on the heap of stones
The white breast of the sea-lark twitters sweet.

That is the doctrine, simple, ancient, true;
Such is life's trial, as old earth smiles and knows.
If you loved only what were worth your love,
Love were clear gain, and wholly well for you:
Make the low nature better by your throes!
Give earth yourself, go up for gain above!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19795023

January 24

✷

Chaucer

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

An old man in a lodge within a park;
The chamber walls depicted all around
With portraitures of huntsman, hawk, and hound,
And the hurt deer. He listeneth to the lark,
Whose song comes with the sunshine through the dark
Of painted glass in leaden lattice bound;
He listeneth and he laugheth at the sound,
Then writeth in a book like any clerk.
He is the poet of the dawn, who wrote
The Canterbury Tales, and his old age
Made beautiful with song; and as I read
I hear the crowing cock, I hear the note
Of lark and linnet, and from every page
Rise odors of ploughed field or flowery mead.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19800567

January 25

✷

A Daughter of Eve

Christina Rossetti

A fool I was to sleep at noon,
And wake when night is chilly
Beneath the comfortless cold moon;
A fool to pluck my rose too soon,
A fool to snap my lily.

My garden-plot I have not kept;
Faded and all-forsaken,
I weep as I have never wept:
Oh it was summer when I slept,
It's winter now I waken.

Talk what you please of future spring
And sun-warm'd sweet to-morrow:—
Stripp'd bare of hope and everything,
No more to laugh, no more to sing,
I sit alone with sorrow.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19806536

January 26

Happy Is England! I Could Be Content

John Keats

Happy is England! I could be content
To see no other verdure than its own;
To feel no other breezes than are blown
Through its tall woods with high romances blent:
Yet do I sometimes feel a languishment
For skies Italian, and an inward groan
To sit upon an Alp as on a throne,
And half forget what world or worldling meant.
Happy is England, sweet her artless daughters;
Enough their simple loveliness for me,
Enough their whitest arms in silence clinging:
Yet do I often warmly burn to see
Beauties of deeper glance, and hear their singing,
And float with them about the summer waters.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19812774

January 27

Grunge

Yusef Komunyakaa

No, sweetheart, I said courtly love.
I was thinking of John Donne's
"Yet this enjoys before it woo,"
but my big hands were dreaming
Pinetop's boogie-woogie piano
taking the ubiquitous night apart.
Not Courtney. I know "inflated tear"
means worlds approaching pain
& colliding, or a heavenly body
calling to darkness, & that shame
has never been my truest garment,
because I was born afraid of needles.
But I've been shoved up against
frayed ropes too, & I had to learn
to bob & weave, to duck & hook,
till I could jab my way out of
a foregone conclusion, till blues
reddened a room. All I know is,
sometimes a man wants only a hug
when something two-steps him
toward a little makeshift stage.
Somehow, between hellhounds
& a guitar solo made of gutstring
& wood, I outlived a stormy night
with snow on my eyelids.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19819185

January 28

✷

Infanta Marina

Wallace Stevens

Her terrace was the sand
And the palms and the twilight.

She made of the motions of her wrist
The grandiose gestures
Of her thought.

The rumpling of the plumes
Of this creature of the evening
Came to be sleights of sails
Over the sea.

And thus she roamed
In the roamings of her fan,

Partaking of the sea,
And of the evening,
As they flowed around
And uttered their subsiding sound.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19824922

January 29

A Hymn to God the Father

John Donne

Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive that sin, through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.

Wilt thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallow'd in, a score?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by thyself, that at my death thy Son
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;
And, having done that, thou hast done;
I fear no more.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19831092

January 30

✷

And The Days Are Not Full Enough

Ezra Pound

And the days are not full enough
And the nights are not full enough
And life slips by like a field mouse
    Not shaking the grass

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19836708

January 31

Good-Night

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Good-night? ah! no; the hour is ill
Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still,
Then it will be good night.

How can I call the lone night good,
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood –
Then it will be – good night.

To hearts which near each other move
From evening close to morning light,
The night is good; because, my love,
They never say good-night.

Note: This was not archived, so I mistakenly reposted it on the 3rd of May. Someone in that thread caught the rerun too! :-)

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19842483

February 1

✷

Sudden Light

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell:
I know the grass beyond the door,
The sweet keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

You have been mine before,—
How long ago I may not know:
But just when at that swallow's soar
Your neck turn'd so,
Some veil did fall,—I knew it all of yore.

Has this been thus before?
And shall not thus time's eddying flight
Still with our lives our love restore
In death's despite,
And day and night yield one delight once more?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19848394

February 2

The Oblation

Algernon Charles Swinburne

Ask nothing more of me, sweet;
All I can give you I give.
Heart of my heart, were it more,
More would be laid at your feet—
Love that should help you to live,
Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give,
Once to have sense of you more,
Touch you and taste of you, sweet,
Think you and breathe you and live,
Swept of your wings as they soar,
Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more
Give you but love of you, sweet.
He that hath more, let him give;
He that hath wings, let him soar;
Mine is the heart at your feet
Here, that must love you to live.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19854124

February 3

Peace

Henry Vaughan

My Soul, there is a country
Afar beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged sentry
All skillful in the wars;
There, above noise and danger
Sweet Peace sits, crown'd with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious friend
And (O my Soul awake!)
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flow'r of peace,
The rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges,
For none can thee secure,
But One, who never changes,
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19860285

February 4

No Second Troy

William Butler Yeats

Why should I blame her that she filled my days
With misery, or that she would of late
Have taught to ignorant men most violent ways,
Or hurled the little streets upon the great,
Had they but courage equal to desire?
What could have made her peaceful with a mind
That nobleness made simple as a fire,
With beauty like a tightened bow, a kind
That is not natural in an age like this,
Being high and solitary and most stern?
Why, what could she have done, being what she is?
Was there another Troy for her to burn?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19866076

February 5

Siberia

James Clarence Mangan

In Siberia's wastes
The ice-wind's breath
Woundeth like the toothed steel;
Lost Siberia doth reveal
Only blight and death.

Blight and death alone.
No Summer shines.
Night is interblent with Day.
In Siberia's wastes alway
The blood blackens, the heart pines.

In Siberia's wastes
No tears are shed,
For they freeze within the brain.
Nought is felt but dullest pain,
Pain acute, yet dead;

Pain as in a dream,
When years go by
Funeral-paced, yet fugitive,
When man lives, and doth not live.
Doth not live - nor die.

In Siberia's wastes
Are sands and rocks
Nothing blooms of green or soft,
But the snow-peaks rise aloft
And the gaunt ice-blocks.

And the exile there
Is one with those;

They are part, and lie is part,
For the sands are in his heart,
And the killing snows.

Therefore, in those wastes
None curse the Czar.
Each man's tongue is cloven by
The North Blast, that heweth nigh
With sharp scymitar.

And such doom each sees,
Till, hunger-gnawn,
And cold-slain, he at length sinks there,
Yet scarce more a corpse than ere
His last breath was drawn.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19871840

February 6

Sonnet 1

William Shakespeare

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory;
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content,
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding.
    Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
    To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19877525

February 7

✷

So We'll Go No More a Roving

Lord Byron

So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19883457

February 8

When I have Fears That I May Cease to Be

John Keats

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,
Before high-pilèd books, in charactery,
Hold like rich garners the full ripened grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows with the magic hand of chance;
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love—then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19889596

February 9

Greek Architecture

Herman Melville

Not magnitude, not lavishness,
But Form—the Site;
Not innovating wilfulness,
But reverence for the Archetype.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19889596

February 10

Fame is a bee

Emily Dickinson

Fame is a bee.
It has a song—
It has a sting—
Ah, too, it has a wing.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19900913

February 11

Break, Break, Break

Lord Tennyson

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19906095

February 12

To Lucasta, Going to the Wars

Richard Lovelace

Tell me not (Sweet) I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee (Dear) so much,
Lov'd I not Honour more.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19911508

February 13

✷

In a Station of the Metro

Ezra Pound

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

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19916467

February 14

✷

Ode on Solitude

Alexander Pope

Happy the man, whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air,
In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire,
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire.

Blest, who can unconcernedly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night; study and ease,
Together mixed; sweet recreation;
And innocence, which most does please,
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19921909

February 15

✷

A Slumber did my Spirit Seal

William Wordsworth

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19927462

February 16

✷

Morning at the Window

T. S. Eliot

They are rattling breakfast plates in basement kitchens,
And along the trampled edges of the street
I am aware of the damp souls of housemaids
Sprouting despondently at area gates.

The brown waves of fog toss up to me
Twisted faces from the bottom of the street,
And tear from a passer-by with muddy skirts
An aimless smile that hovers in the air
And vanishes along the level of the roofs.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19933253

February 17

✷

This Landscape Before Me

Sarah Holland-Batt

Is unwritten, though it has lived in violence.

First the factory stood, quiet as an asylum.
Then the annihilating mallee with its red fists of blossoms
and the mountain ash creeping over it like a stain.

I have no proof, but I tell you
there were leadlight windows here once, barred.
They cast a little striped light on the women.

Now in scrub and yellow broom I stand on a history
braided and unbraided by stiff Irish wrists.
The rope and span and carded wool are unpicked
as are their faces and names.

Londonderry, Cork, Galway, Kildare—
as I say the words they are sucked away
to a hemisphere in darkness.

I will not presume to say
what suffering is or how it was meted out in this place.
At what point it breaks a body I cannot tell.

But this morning I saw a young rabbit
hunched in brush and shadow.
I saw its lesioned face, its legs too thin to scramble,
the blood-berry red and pink scab of its eye.

It had caught the disease
we brought here for it
and wanted a quiet place to die.

And it was lucky, or as lucky as it would get—
there was time and light, the hawks and dogs
had not been written yet, and were still out of sight.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19939309

February 18

A Poison Tree

William Blake

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night.
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,
When the night had veild the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19946157

February 19

There Is Pleasure In The Pathless Woods

Lord Byron

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean–roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin–his control
Stops with the shore;–upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,–thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,–thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth: —there let him lay.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19952110

February 20

Adam's Apple

John Montague

Her skin is smooth
as peach or appleblossom
-or a snakeskin.

The snake's fangs gleam,
the fruit glistens
as warmly in her palm

as ever it shone
on the holy tree.
He savours it

so slowly
it sticks in
our throat forever.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19957730

February 21

✷

Bitter-Sweet

George Herbert

Ah my deare angrie Lord,
Since thou dost love, yet strike;
Cast down, yet help afford;
Sure I will do the like.

I will complain, yet praise;
I will bewail, approve:
And all my sowre-sweet dayes
I will lament, and love.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19964064

February 22

✷

Interior Poem

Hart Crane

It sheds a shy solemnity,
This lamp in our poor room.
O grey and gold amenity, —
Silence and gentle gloom!

Wide from the world, a stolen hour
We claim, and none may know
How love blooms like a tardy flower
Here in the day's after-glow.

And even should the world break in
With jealous threat and guile,
The world, at last, must bow and win
Our pity and a smile.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19969217

February 23

Epitaph

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Stop, Christian passer-by!—Stop, child of God,
And read with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
A poet lies, or that which once seemed he.
O, lift one thought in prayer for S. T. C.;
That he who many a year with toil of breath
Found death in life, may here find life in death!
Mercy for praise—to be forgiven for fame
He asked, and hoped, through Christ. Do thou the same!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19974665

February 24

Anthem for Doomed Youth

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 goodbyes.
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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19979782

February 25

✷

The Hollow Men I

T. S. Eliot

I

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
Our dried voices, when
We whisper together
Are quiet and meaningless
As wind in dry grass
Or rats' feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar

Shape without form, shade without colour,
Paralysed force, gesture without motion;

Those who have crossed
With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom
Remember us-if at all-not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men
The stuffed men.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19983822

February 26

✷

The Hollow Men II & III

T. S. Eliot

II

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
In death's dream kingdom
These do not appear:
There, the eyes are
Sunlight on a broken column
There, is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the wind's singing
More distant and more solemn
Than a fading star.

Let me be no nearer
In death's dream kingdom
Let me also wear
Such deliberate disguises
Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves
In a field
Behaving as the wind behaves
No nearer-

Not that final meeting
In the twilight kingdom

III

This is the dead land
This is cactus land
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive

The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star.

Is it like this
In death's other kingdom
Waking alone
At the hour when we are
Trembling with tenderness
Lips that would kiss
Form prayers to broken stone.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19987978

February 27

✷

The Hollow Men IV & V

T. S. Eliot

IV

The eyes are not here
There are no eyes here
In this valley of dying stars
In this hollow valley
This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms

In this last of meeting places
We grope together
And avoid speech
Gathered on this beach of the tumid river

Sightless, unless
The eyes reappear
As the perpetual star
Multifoliate rose
Of death's twilight kingdom
The hope only
Of empty men.

V

Here we go round the prickly pear
Prickly pear prickly pear
Here we go round the prickly pear
At five o'clock in the morning.

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion

And the act
Falls the Shadow
    For Thine is the Kingdom

Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion
And the response
Falls the Shadow
    Life is very long

Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence
And the descent
Falls the Shadow
    For Thine is the Kingdom

For Thine is
Life is
For Thine is the

This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19991722

February 28

Crab

Angus Calder

Four crabs from the cold firth
alive for a shilling. The largest
reared in the pot, in spite of
the fierce water, but soon
we cracked his limbs with our teeth
and wheedled with spoons and fingers
for the last shreds of flesh
from the crannies of his briny body.

In that brittle maze
I found no features to remind me
of our brains, our livers
or our smooth bellies, yet doubtless
their functions were held by some part
of the paste of his cavities.

Spread, soup and risotto -
only the gills were rejected.

In the days we ate him
I did not forget
his moment on the floor
to amuse the baby, when she
gloated at the slow clash
of his last menace,
nor that shape which made me think
of a soft soldier
fried in the cockpit of a tank.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S19995747

March 1

The Human Seasons

John Keats

Four Seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:
He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honied cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves
His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20000124

March 2

The Sonnet-Ballad

Gwendolyn Brooks

Oh mother, mother, where is happiness?
They took my lover's tallness off to war,
Left me lamenting. Now I cannot guess
What I can use an empty heart-cup for.
He won't be coming back here any more.
Some day the war will end, but, oh, I knew
When he went walking grandly out that door
That my sweet love would have to be untrue.
Would have to be untrue. Would have to court
Coquettish death, whose impudent and strange
Possessive arms and beauty (of a sort)
Can make a hard man hesitate—and change.
And he will be the one to stammer, "Yes."
Oh mother, mother, where is happiness?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20004404

March 3

In Time of "The Breaking of Nations"

Thomas Hardy

I
Only a man harrowing clods
In a slow silent walk
With an old horse that stumbles and nods
Half asleep as they stalk.

II
Only thin smoke without flame
From the heaps of couch-grass;
Yet this will go onward the same
Though Dynasties pass.

III
Yonder a maid and her wight
Come whispering by:
War's annals will cloud into night
Ere their story die.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20008552

March 4

Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries

A. E. Housman

These, in the days when heaven was falling,
The hour when earth's foundations fled,
Followed their mercenary calling
And took their wages and are dead.

Their shoulders held the sky suspended;
They stood, and the earth's foundations stay;
What God abandoned, these defended,
And saved the sum of things for pay.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20013061

March 5

✷

After the War

May Wedderburn Cannan

After the war perhaps I'll sit again
Out on the terrace where I sat with you,
And see the changeless sky and hills beat blue
And live an afternoon of summer through.

I shall remember then, and sad at heart
For the lost day of happiness we knew,
Wish only that some other man were you
And spoke my name as once you used to do.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20017607

March 6

Festubert: The Old German Line

Edmund Blunden

Tired with dull grief, grown old before my day,
I sit in solitude and only hear
Long silent laughters, murmurings of dismay,
The lost intensities of hope and fear;
In those old marshes yet the rifles lie,
On the thin breastwork flutter the grey rags,
The very books I read are there—and I
Dead as the men I loved, wait while life drags

Its wounded length from those sad streets of war
Into green places here, that were my own;
But now what once was mine is mine no more,
I seek such neighbours here and I find none.
With such strong gentleness and tireless will
Those ruined houses seared themselves in me,
Passionate I look for their dumb story still,
And the charred stub outspeaks the living tree.

I rise up at the singing of a bird
And scarcely knowing slink along the lane,
I dare not give a soul a look or word
For all have homes and none's at home in vain:
Deep red the rose burned in the grim redoubt,
The self-sown wheat around was like a flood,
In the hot path the lizards lolled time out,
The saints in broken shrines were bright as blood.

Sweet Mary's shrine between the sycamores!
There we would go, my friend of friends and I,
And snatch long moments from the grudging wars;
Whose dark made light intense to see them by ...

Shrewd bit the morning fog, the whining shots
Spun from the wrangling wire; then in warm swoon
The sun hushed all but the cool orchard plots,
We crept in the tall grass and slept till noon.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20022840

March 7

Spring

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Nothing is so beautiful as Spring –
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;
Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;
The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush
The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?
A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning
In Eden garden. – Have, get, before it cloy,
Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,
Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20027952

March 8

✷

A Clear Midnight

Walt Whitman

This is thy hour O Soul, thy free flight into the wordless,
Away from books, away from art, the day erased, the lesson done,
Thee fully forth emerging, silent, gazing, pondering the themes thou lovest best,
Night, sleep, death and the stars.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20033650

March 9

✷

A Girl

Ezra Pound

The tree has entered my hands,
The sap has ascended my arms,
The tree has grown in my breast -
Downward,
The branches grow out of me, like arms.

Tree you are,
Moss you are,
You are violets with wind above them.
A child - so high - you are,
And all this is folly to the world.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20037885

March 10

Immortality

Matthew Arnold

Foil'd by our fellow-men, depress'd, outworn,
We leave the brutal world to take its way,
And, Patience! in another life, we say
The world shall be thrust down, and we up-borne.

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn
The world's poor, routed leavings? or will they,
Who fail'd under the heat of this life's day,
Support the fervours of the heavenly morn?

No, no! the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,

From strength to strength advancing—only he,
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20042800

March 11

If—

Rudyard Kipling

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

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

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

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20047476

March 12

Come not when I am dead

Lord Tennyson

Come not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover cry;
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest:
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave to where I lie:
Go by, go by.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20052650

March 13

✷

In Piam Memoriam

Geoffrey Hill

1
Created purely from glass the saint stands,
Exposing his gifted quite empty hands
Like a conjurer about to begin,
A righteous man begging of righteous men.

2
In the sun lily-and-gold-coloured,
Filtering the cruder light, he has endured,
A feature for our regard; and will keep;
Of worldly purity the stained archetype.

3
The scummed pond twitches. The great holly-tree,
Emptied and shut, blows clear of wasting snow,
The common, puddled substance: beneath,
Like a revealed mineral, a new earth.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20057973

March 14

✷

Love Lies Bleeding

Algernon Charles Swinburne

Love lies bleeding in the bed whereover
Roses lean with smiling mouths or pleading:
Earth lies laughing where the sun's dart clove her:
Love lies bleeding.

Stately shine his purple plumes, exceeding
Pride of princes: nor shall maid or lover
Find on earth a fairer sign worth heeding.

Yet may love, sore wounded scarce recover
Strength and spirit again, with life receding:
Hope and joy, wind-winged, about him hover:
Love lies bleeding.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20063255

March 15

Life in a Love

Robert Browning

Escape me?
Never—
Beloved!
While I am I, and you are you,
So long as the world contains us both,
Me the loving and you the loth,
While the one eludes, must the other pursue.
My life is a fault at last, I fear:
It seems too much like a fate, indeed!
Though I do my best I shall scarce succeed.
But what if I fail of my purpose here?
It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
And, baffled, get up and begin again,—
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.
While, look but once from your farthest bound
At me so deep in the dust and dark,
No sooner the old hope goes to ground
Than a new one, straight to the self-same mark,
I shape me—
Ever
Removed!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20068580

March 16

"Soldier from the wars returning"

A. E. Housman

Soldier from the wars returning,
Spoiler of the taken town,
Here is ease that asks not earning;
Turn you in and sit you down.

Peace is come and wars are over,
Welcome you and welcome all,
While the charger crops the clover
And his bridle hangs in stall.

Now no more of winters biting,
Filth in trench from fall to spring,
Summers full of sweat and fighting
For the Kesar or the King.

Rest you, charger, rust you, bridle;
Kings and kesars, keep your pay;
Soldier, sit you down and idle
At the inn of night for aye.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20073638

March 17

✷

Laughing Song

William Blake

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by;
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it;

when the meadows laugh with lively green,
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,
When Mary and Susan and Emily
With their sweet round mouths sing 'Ha, ha he!'

When the painted birds laugh in the shade,
Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread:
Come live, and be merry, and join with me,
To sing the sweet chorus of 'Ha, ha, he!'

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20079014

March 18

✷

The Sea-Shell

Allen Upward

To the passionate lover, whose sighs come back to him on every breeze, all the world is like a murmuring sea-shell.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20083814

March 19

✷

The Second Coming

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: somewhere in sands of the desert
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
Reel 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?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20088504

March 20

"I Said to Love"

Thomas Hardy

I said to Love,
"It is not now as in old days
When men adored thee and thy ways
All else above;
Named thee the Boy, the Bright, the One
Who spread a heaven beneath the sun,"
I said to Love.

I said to him,
"We now know more of thee than then;
We were but weak in judgment when,
With hearts abrim,
We clamoured thee that thou would'st please
Inflict on us thine agonies,"
I said to him.

I said to Love,
"Thou art not young, thou art not fair,
No faery darts, no cherub air,
Nor swan, nor dove
Are thine; but features pitiless,
And iron daggers of distress,"
I said to Love.

"Depart then, Love! . . .
- Man's race shall end, dost threaten thou?
The age to come the man of now
Know nothing of? -
We fear not such a threat from thee;
We are too old in apathy!
Mankind shall cease.—So let it be,"

I said to Love.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20093656

March 21

Beyond the Sea

Thomas Love Peacock

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
My heart is gone, far, far from me;
And ever on its track will flee
My thoughts, my dreams, beyond the sea.

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
The swallow wanders fast and free:
Oh, happy bird! were I like thee,
I, too, would fly beyond the sea.

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,
Are kindly hearts and social glee:
But here for me they may not be;
My heart is gone beyond the sea.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20098258

March 22

A Song Of The Degrees

Ezra Pound

I
Rest me with Chinese colours,
For I think the glass is evil.

II
The wind moves above the wheat–
With a silver crashing,
A thin war of metal.

I have known the golden disc,
I have seen it melting above me.
I have known the stone-bright place,
The hall of clear colours.

III
O glass subtly evil, O confusion of colours !
O light bound and bent in, soul of the captive,
Why am I warned? Why am I sent away?
Why is your glitter full of curious mistrust?
O glass subtle and cunning, O powdery gold!
O filaments of amber, two-faced iridescence!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20102615

March 23

The Passionate Shepherd to His Love

Christopher Marlowe

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That Valleys, groves, hills, and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the Rocks,
Seeing the Shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow Rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing Madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of Roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of Myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty Lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and Ivy buds,
With Coral clasps and Amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

The Shepherds' Swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20107415

March 24

✷

The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd

Sir Walter Ralegh

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every Shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move,
To live with thee, and be thy love.

Time drives the flocks from field to fold,
When Rivers rage and Rocks grow cold,
And Philomel becometh dumb,
The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields,
To wayward winter reckoning yields,
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of Roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten:
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and Ivy buds,
The Coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy love.

But could youth last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee, and be thy love.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20112978

March 25

✷

Amoretti XXX: My Love is like to ice, and I to fire

Edmund Spenser

My Love is like to ice, and I to fire:
How comes it then that this her cold so great
Is not dissolved through my so hot desire,
But harder grows the more I her entreat?
Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
Is not allayed by her heart-frozen cold,
But that I burn much more in boiling sweat,
And feel my flames augmented manifold?
What more miraculous thing may be told,
That fire, which all things melts, should harden ice,
And ice, which is congeal'd with senseless cold,
Should kindle fire by wonderful device?
Such is the power of love in gentle mind,
That it can alter all the course of kind.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20117344

March 26

Prospice

Robert Browning

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20122928

March 27

I Hear an Army

James Joyce

I hear an army charging upon the land,
And the thunder of horses plunging, foam about their knees:
Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,
Disdaining the reins, with fluttering whips, the charioteers.

They cry unto the night their battle-name:
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling laughter.
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding flame,
Clanging, clanging upon the heart as upon an anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long, green hair:
They come out of the sea and run shouting by the shore.
My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?
My love, my love, my love, why have you left me alone?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20127903

March 28

✷

"Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art"

John Keats

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20133503

March 29

Mutability

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I.
We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon;
How restlessly they speed and gleam and quiver,
Streaking the darkness radiantly! yet soon
Night closes round, and they are lost for ever:—

II.
Or like forgotten lyres whose dissonant strings
Give various response to each varying blast,
To whose frail frame no second motion brings
One mood or modulation like the last.

III.
We rest—a dream has power to poison sleep;
We rise—one wandering thought pollutes the day;
We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or weep,
Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away:—

IV.
It is the same!—For, be it joy or sorrow,
The path of its departure still is free;
Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his morrow;
Nought may endure but Mutability.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20137462

March 30

✷

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

William Butler Yeats

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20142140

March 31

Lines Written in Early Spring

William Wordsworth

I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20146960

April 1

✷

Daisy Time

Marjorie Pickthall

See, the grass is full of stars,
Fallen in their brightness;
Hearts they have of shining gold,
Rays of shining whiteness.

Buttercups have honeyed hearts,
Bees they love the clover,
But I love the daisies' dance
All the meadow over.

Blow, O blow, you happy winds,
Singing summer's praises,
Up the field and down the field
A-dancing with the daisies.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20152791

April 2

Sonnet 7: How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth

John Milton

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stol'n on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure ev'n
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n:
All is, if I have grace to use it so
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20159142

April 3

There is no Frigate like a Book (1286)

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 –

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20163810

April 4

London

William Blake

By I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice: in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldiers sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20168490

April 5

✷

Love and Sleep

Algernon Charles Swinburne

Lying asleep between the strokes of night
I saw my love lean over my sad bed,
Pale as the duskiest lily's leaf or head,
Smooth-skinned and dark, with bare throat made to bite,
Too wan for blushing and too warm for white,
But perfect-coloured without white or red.
And her lips opened amorously, and said –
I wist not what, saving one word – Delight.

And all her face was honey to my mouth,
And all her body pasture to mine eyes;
The long lithe arms and hotter hands than fire,
The quivering flanks, hair smelling of the south,
The bright light feet, the splendid supple thighs
And glittering eyelids of my soul's desire.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20173781

April 6

✷

The Emperor of Ice-Cream

Wallace Stevens

Call the roller of big cigars,
The muscular one, and bid him whip
In kitchen cups concupiscent curds.
Let the wenches dawdle in such dress
As they are used to wear, and let the boys
Bring flowers in last month's newspapers.
Let be be finale of seem.
The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.

Take from the dresser of deal,
Lacking the three glass knobs, that sheet
On which she embroidered fantails once
And spread it so as to cover her face.
If her horny feet protrude, they come
To show how cold she is, and dumb.
Let the lamp affix its beam.
The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20179223

April 7

Song from a Country Fair

Léonie Adams

When tunes jigged nimbler than the blood
And quick and high the bows would prance
And every fiddle string would burst
To catch what's lost beyond the string,
While half afraid their children stood,
I saw the old come out to dance.
The heart is not so light at first,
But heavy like a bough in spring.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20185196

April 8

Lightness in Autumn

Robert Fitzgerald

The rake is like a wand or fan,
With bamboo springing in a span
To catch the leaves that I amass
In bushels on the evening grass.

I reckon how the wind behaves
And rake them lightly into waves
And rake the waves upon a pile,
Then stop my raking for a while.

The sun is down, the air is blue,
And soon the fingers will be, too,
But there are children to appease
With ducking in those leafy seas.

So loudly rummaging their bed
On the dry billows of the dead,
They are not warned at four and three
Of natural mortality.

Before their supper they require
A dragon field of yellow fire
To light and toast them in the gloom.
So much for old earth's ashen doom.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20189936

April 9

Inversnaid

Gerard Manley Hopkins

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollcock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lakes fall home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn froth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, fell frowning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that site over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20196526

April 10

Sound And Sense

Alexander Pope

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offense,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense:
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar;
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labors, and the words move slow;
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.
Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20201365

April 11

The Convergence of the Twain

Thomas Hardy

(Lines on the loss of the "Titanic")

In a solitude of the sea
Deep from human vanity,
And the Pride of Life that planned her, stilly couches she.

Steel chambers, late the pyres
Of her salamandrine fires,
Cold currents thrid, and turn to rhythmic tidal lyres.

Over the mirrors meant
To glass the opulent
The sea-worm crawls — grotesque, slimed, dumb, indifferent.

Jewels in joy designed
To ravish the sensuous mind
Lie lightless, all their sparkles bleared and black and blind.

Dim moon-eyed fishes near
Gaze at the gilded gear
And query: "What does this vaingloriousness down here?" ...

Well: while was fashioning
This creature of cleaving wing,
The Immanent Will that stirs and urges everything

Prepared a sinister mate
For her — so gaily great —

A Shape of Ice, for the time far and dissociate.

And as the smart ship grew
In stature, grace, and hue,
In shadowy silent distance grew the Iceberg too.

Alien they seemed to be;
No mortal eye could see
The intimate welding of their later history,

Or sign that they were bent
By paths coincident
On being anon twin halves of one august event,

Till the Spinner of the Years
Said "Now!" And each one hears,
And consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20206245

April 12

✷

Ozymandias

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled 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."

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20211399

April 13

✷

Aedh Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven

William Butler Yeats

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

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20216578

April 14

✷

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20221672

April 15

✷

O Captain! My Captain!

Walt Whitman

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;

Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20226835

April 16

Remember

Christina Rossetti

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you plann'd:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20232444

April 17

In Memory of Jane Fraser

Geoffrey Hill

When snow like sheep lay in the fold
And winds went begging at each door,
And the far hills were blue with cold,
And a cold shroud lay on the moor,

She kept the siege. And every day
We watched her brooding over death
Like a strong bird above its prey.
The room filled with the kettle's breath.

Damp curtains glued against the pane
Sealed time away. Her body froze
As if to freeze us all, and chain
Creation to a stunned repose.

She died before the world could stir.
In March the ice unloosed the brook
And water ruffled the sun's hair.
Dead cones upon the alder shook.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20236746

April 18

✷

Fire and Ice

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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20241346

April 19

Aftermath

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

When the summer fields are mown,
When the birds are fledged and flown,
    And the dry leaves strew the path;
With the falling of the snow,
With the cawing of the crow,
Once again the fields we mow
    And gather in the aftermath.

Not the sweet, new grass with flowers
Is this harvesting of ours;
    Not the upland clover bloom;
But the rowen mixed with weeds,
Tangled tufts from marsh and meads,
Where the poppy drops its seeds
    In the silence and the gloom.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20246062

April 20

To the Skylark

William Wordsworth

Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine;
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20250787

April 21

✷

Paradoxes and Oxymorons

John Ashbery

This poem is concerned with language on a very plain level.
Look at it talking to you. You look out a window
Or pretend to fidget. You have it but you don't have it.
You miss it, it misses you. You miss each other.

The poem is sad because it wants to be yours, and cannot.
What's a plain level? It is that and other things,
Bringing a system of them into play. Play?
Well, actually, yes, but I consider play to be

A deeper outside thing, a dreamed role-pattern,
As in the division of grace these long August days
Without proof. Open-ended. And before you know
It gets lost in the steam and chatter of typewriters.

It has been played once more. I think you exist only
To tease me into doing it, on your level, and then you aren't there
Or have adopted a different attitude. And the poem
Has set me softly down beside you. The poem is you.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20255451

April 22

On Seeing the Elgin Marbles

John Keats

My spirit is too weak—mortality
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,
And each imagined pinnacle and steep
Of godlike hardship tells me I must die
Like a sick eagle looking at the sky.
Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep
That I have not the cloudy winds to keep
Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.
Such dim-conceived glories of the brain
Bring round the heart an undescribable feud;
So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,
That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude
Wasting of old time—with a billowy main—
A sun—a shadow of a magnitude.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20260609

April 23

✷

Sonnet 18: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
    So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
    So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20266005

April 24

Thalassography

Sarah Holland-Batt

I have known these estuaries—
the channels and canals, the backwaters
that flush and eddy to the Pacific,

I have skimmed that muddied slurry,
felt the nip in the throat
where the salt in the air is the salt of the coast,

I have tacked where the tide is incomplete:
no rollers and breakers,
only an ebb that rocks the wayfarers—

a rush of silver, the gavel-smack of mullet
in the night, mud crabs elbowing
denwards under concrete slabs of boat ramps—

I have stalked where herons stilt and spear
baitfish in green afternoons,
cast crab pots in loose analemmas

to watch the black sonar spread,
tracked prawn trawlers on the broadwater
crawling back in the lavender dawn

then sat at the jetty's edge
and shucked those tiger shells,
cast sucked heads back into the dark,

crushed mussel shell underfoot
for the burn of sharpened chitin,
stepped where stingrays wallow and idle,

shuffling their barbs, waiting to strike.

I have spent half my life in low tide—
nights where I have not known

if I am contracting or dragging out again,
where the movement of the water
is the movement of my mind—

unending comings and goings
of sounds and narrows, those entry points
to my two continents—and my history

is the history of currents: a canal small enough
to catch a childhood in its net,
water vast enough to divide a life.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20271601

April 25

✷

Sonnet 75

Edmund Spenser

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washed it away:
Agayne I wrote it with a second hand;
But came the tyde, and made my paynes his pray.
"Vayne man," sayd she, "that doest in vaine assay
A mortall thing so to immortalize;
For I my selve shall lyke to this decay,
And eke my name bee wyped out lykewize."
"Not so," quod I; "let baser things devize
To dy in dust, but you shall live by fame:
My verse your vertues rare shall eternize,
And in the hevens wryte your glorious name.
Where, when as death shall all the world subdew,
Our love shall live, and later life renew."

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20276508

April 26

✷

The Tyger

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 seize 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?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20280735

April 27

To a Marsh Hawk in Spring

Henry David Thoreau

There is health in thy gray wing,
Health of nature's furnishing.
Say, thou modern-winged antique,
Was thy mistress ever sick?
In each heaving of thy wing
Thou dost health and leisure bring,
Thou dost waive disease and pain
And resume new life again.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20285305

April 28

✷

Pied Beauty

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20290269

April 29

✷

Holy Sonnets: Death, be not proud

John Donne

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20294847

April 30

Sonnet 19: When I consider how my light is spent

John Milton

When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one Talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my Soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er Land and Ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait."

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20300012

May 1

✷

Do not go gentle into that good night

Dylan Thomas

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20304941

May 2

✷

She Walks in Beauty

Lord Byron

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20310089

May 3

✷

Good-Night

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Good-night? ah! no; the hour is ill
Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still,
Then it will be good night.

How can I call the lone night good,
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood—
Then it will be—good night.

To hearts which near each other move
From evening close to morning light,
The night is good; because, my love,
They never say good-night.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20315172

May 4

Oswald Spengler Watches the Sunset

Stephen Edgar

The air is drenched with day, but one by one
    The flowers close on cue,
Obedient to the declining sun.
Forest and grasses, bush and leaf and stem,
They cannot move (and nor, you dream, can you);
    It is the wind that plays with them.
Only the little midges dancing still
    Against the evening move at will.

This tiny swarm still dancing on and on
    Like something in a net
Expanding and contracting, that late swan
Towing its wake, a solitary crow
Crossing the twilight in its silhouette,
    The fox proceeding sly and slow:
They are small worlds of purpose which infuse
    The world around with will to choose.

An animalcule in a drop of dew—
    And so diminutive
That if the human eye should look clear through
That globe there would be nothing there to see—
Although it only has a blink to live,
    Yet in the face of this is free;
The oak, in whose vast foliage this dot
    Hangs from a single leaf, is not.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20319487

May 5

✷

Stand Whoso List

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Stand whoso list upon the slipper top
Of court's estates, and let me here rejoice;
And use me quiet without let or stop,
Unknown in court, that hath such brackish joys:
In hidden place, so let my days forth pass,
That when my years be done, withouten noise,
I may die agèd after the common trace,
For him death gripeth right hard by the crope
That is much known of other; and of himself alas,
Doth die unknown, dazed with dreadful face.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20324425

May 6

The Mothering Blackness

Maya Angelou

She came home running
back to the mothering blackness
deep in the smothering blackness
white tears icicle gold plains of her face
She came home running

She came down creeping
here to the black arms waiting
now to the warm heart waiting
rime of alien dreams befrosts her rich brown face
She came down creeping

She came home blameless
black yet as Hagar's daughter
tall as was Sheba's daughter
threats of northern winds die on the desert's face
She came home blameless

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20329191

May 7

✷

Blackberry-Picking

Seamus Heaney

Late August, given heavy rain and sun
For a full week, the blackberries would ripen.
At first, just one, a glossy purple clot
Among others, red, green, hard as a knot.
You ate that first one and its flesh was sweet
Like thickened wine: summer's blood was in it
Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for
Picking. Then red ones inked up and that hunger
Sent us out with milk cans, pea tins, jam-pots
Where briars scratched and wet grass bleached our boots.
Round hayfields, cornfields and potato-drills
We trekked and picked until the cans were full,
Until the tinkling bottom had been covered
With green ones, and on top big dark blobs burned
Like a plate of eyes. Our hands were peppered
With thorn pricks, our palms sticky as Bluebeard's.

We hoarded the fresh berries in the byre.
But when the bath was filled we found a fur,
A rat-grey fungus, glutting on our cache.
The juice was stinking too. Once off the bush
The fruit fermented, the sweet flesh would turn sour.
I always felt like crying. It wasn't fair
That all the lovely canfuls smelt of rot.
Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20333752

May 8

✷

Now Winter Nights Enlarge

Thomas Campion

Now winter nights enlarge
The number of their hours;
And clouds their storms discharge
Upon the airy towers.
Let now the chimneys blaze
And cups o'erflow with wine,
Let well-turned words amaze
With harmony divine.
Now yellow waxen lights
Shall wait on honey love
While youthful revels, masques, and courtly sights
Sleep's leaden spells remove.

This time doth well dispense
With lovers' long discourse;
Much speech hath some defense,
Though beauty no remorse.
All do not all things well;
Some measures comely tread,
Some knotted riddles tell,
Some poems smoothly read.
The summer hath his joys,
And winter his delights;
Though love and all his pleasures are but toys,
They shorten tedious nights.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20338942

May 9

Crossing the Bar

Lord Tennyson

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20343779

May 10

It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free

William Wordsworth

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquility;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea;
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20349183

May 11

Immortal Sails

Alfred Noyes

Now, in a breath, we'll burst those gates of gold,
And ransack heaven before our moment fails.
Now, in a breath, before we, too, grow old,
We'll mount and sing and spread immortal sails.

It is not time that makes eternity.
Love and an hour may quite out-span the years,
And give us more to hear and more to see
Than life can wash away with all its tears.

Dear, when we part, at last, that sunset sky
Shall not be touched with deeper hues than this;
But we shall ride the lightning ere we die
And seize our brief infinitude of bliss,

With time to spare for all that heaven can tell,
While eyes meet eyes, and look their last farewell.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20354220

May 12

✷

To His Coy Mistress

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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20358663

May 13

✷

Holy Sonnets: Batter my heart, three-person'd God

John Donne

Batter my heart, three-person'd God, for you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
I, like an usurp'd town to another due,
Labor to admit you, but oh, to no end;
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd fain,
But am betroth'd unto your enemy;
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20362802

May 14

✷

Beat! Beat! Drums!

Walt Whitman

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Through the windows—through doors—burst like a ruthless force,
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation,
Into the school where the scholar is studying,
Leave not the bridegroom quiet—no happiness must he have now with his bride,
Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his field or gathering his grain,
So fierce you whirr and pound you drums—so shrill you bugles blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Over the traffic of cities—over the rumble of wheels in the streets;
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses? no sleepers must sleep in those beds,
No bargainers' bargains by day—no brokers or speculators—would they continue?
Would the talkers be talking? would the singer attempt to sing?
Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case before the judge?
Then rattle quicker, heavier drums—you bugles wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation,
Mind not the timid—mind not the weeper or prayer,

Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties,
Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie awaiting the hearses,
So strong you thump O terrible drums—so loud you bugles blow.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20367471

May 15

Nothing Gold Can Stay

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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20371627

May 16

✷

Astrophil and Stella 31: With how sad steps, O Moon

Sir Philip Sidney

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What, may it be that even in heav'nly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries!
Sure, if that long-with love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case,
I read it in thy looks; thy languish'd grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
Then, ev'n of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20376297

May 17

Arms and the Boy

Wilfred Owen

Let the boy try along this bayonet-blade
How cold steel is, and keen with hunger of blood;
Blue with all malice, like a madman's flash;
And thinly drawn with famishing for flesh.

Lend him to stroke these blind, blunt bullet-leads,
Which long to nuzzle in the hearts of lads,
Or give him cartridges of fine zinc teeth
Sharp with the sharpness of grief and death.

For his teeth seem for laughing round an apple.
There lurk no claws behind his fingers supple;
And God will grow no talons at his heels,
Nor antlers through the thickness of his curls.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20380466

May 18

Dreams

Robert Herrick

Here we are all, by day; by night we are hurled
By dreams, each one into a several world.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20384765

May 19

✷

Happy the man

John Dryden

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He who can call today his own:
He who, secure within, can say,
Tomorrow do thy worst, for I have lived today.
Be fair or foul or rain or shine
The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine.
Not Heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20389359

May 20

✷

And death shall have no dominion

Dylan Thomas

And death shall have no dominion.
Dead men naked they shall be one
With the man in the wind and the west moon;
When their bones are picked clean and the clean bones
gone,
They shall have stars at elbow and foot;
Though they go mad they shall be sane,
Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again;
Though lovers be lost love shall not;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion.
Under the windings of the sea
They lying long shall not die windily;
Twisting on racks when sinews give way,
Strapped to a wheel, yet they shall not break;
Faith in their hands shall snap in two,
And the unicorn evils run them through;
Split all ends up they shan't crack;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion.
No more may gulls cry at their ears
Or waves break loud on the seashores;
Where blew a flower may a flower no more
Lift its head to the blows of the rain;
Though they be mad and dead as nails,
Heads of the characters hammer through daisies;
Break in the sun till the sun breaks down,

And death shall have no dominion.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20394037

May 21

✷

This Room

John Ashbery

The room I entered was a dream of this room.
Surely all those feet on the sofa were mine.
The oval portrait
of a dog was me at an early age.
Something shimmers, something is hushed up.

We had macaroni for lunch every day
except Sunday, when a small quail was induced
to be served to us. Why do I tell you these things?
You are not even here.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20399090

May 22

✷

Ring Out Your Bells

Sir Philip Sidney

Ring out your bells, let mourning shows be spread;
For Love is dead—
All love is dead, infected
With plague of deep disdain;
Worth, as nought worth, rejected,
And Faith fair scorn doth gain.
From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female franzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Weep, neighbours, weep; do you not hear it said
That Love is dead?
His death-bed, peacock's folly;
His winding-sheet is shame;
His will, false-seeming holy;
His sole exec'tor, blame.
From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female franzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Let dirge be sung and trentals rightly read,
For Love is dead;
Sir Wrong his tomb ordaineth
My mistress' marble heart,
Which epitaph containeth,
"Her eyes were once his dart."
From so ungrateful fancy,

From such a female franzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Alas, I lie, rage hath this error bred;
Love is not dead;
Love is not dead, but sleepeth
In her unmatched mind,
Where she his counsel keepeth,
Till due desert she find.
Therefore from so vile fancy,
To call such wit a franzy,
Who Love can temper thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20403282

May 23

✷

Autumn Song

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Know'st thou not at the fall of the leaf
How the heart feels a languid grief
Laid on it for a covering,
And how sleep seems a goodly thing
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf?

And how the swift beat of the brain
Falters because it is in vain,
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf
Knowest thou not? and how the chief
Of joys seems—not to suffer pain?

Know'st thou not at the fall of the leaf
How the soul feels like a dried sheaf
Bound up at length for harvesting,
And how death seems a comely thing
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20409063

May 24

✷

Storm on the Island

Seamus Heaney

We are prepared: we build our houses squat,
Sink walls in rock and roof them with good slate.
This wizened earth has never troubled us
With hay, so, as you see, there are no stacks
Or stooks that can be lost. Nor are there trees
Which might prove company when it blows full
Blast: you know what I mean - leaves and branches
Can raise a tragic chorus in a gale
So that you listen to the thing you fear
Forgetting that it pummels your house too.
But there are no trees, no natural shelter.
You might think that the sea is company,
Exploding comfortably down on the cliffs
But no: when it begins, the flung spray hits
The very windows, spits like a tame cat
Turned savage. We just sit tight while wind dives
And strafes invisibly. Space is a salvo,
We are bombarded with the empty air.
Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20413744

May 25

✷

Sea Rose

H. D.

Rose, harsh rose,
marred and with stint of petals,
meagre flower, thin,
sparse of leaf,

more precious
than a wet rose
single on a stem—
you are caught in the drift.

Stunted, with small leaf,
you are flung on the sand,
you are lifted
in the crisp sand
that drives in the wind.

Can the spice-rose
drip such acrid fragrance
hardened in a leaf?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20419023

May 26

At Melville's Tomb

Hart Crane

Often beneath the wave, wide from this ledge
The dice of drowned men's bones he saw bequeath
An embassy. Their numbers as he watched,
Beat on the dusty shore and were obscured.

And wrecks passed without sound of bells,
The calyx of death's bounty giving back
A scattered chapter, livid hieroglyph,
The portent wound in corridors of shells.

Then in the circuit calm of one vast coil,
Its lashings charmed and malice reconciled,
Frosted eyes there were that lifted altars;
And silent answers crept across the stars.

Compass, quadrant and sextant contrive
No farther tides ... High in the azure steeps
Monody shall not wake the mariner.
This fabulous shadow only the sea keeps.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20423745

May 27

A Dialogue between the Soul and the Body

Andrew Marvell

SOUL
O Who shall, from this Dungeon, raise
A Soul inslav'd so many wayes?
With bolts of Bones, that fetter'd stands
In Feet ; and manacled in Hands.
Here blinded with an Eye ; and there
Deaf with the drumming of an Ear.
A Soul hung up, as 'twere, in Chains
Of Nerves, and Arteries, and Veins.
Tortur'd, besides each other part,1
In a vain Head, and double Heart.

BODY
O who shall me deliver whole,
From bonds of this Tyrannic Soul?
Which, stretcht upright, impales me so,
That mine own Precipice I go;
And warms and moves this needless Frame:
(A Fever could but do the same.)
And, wanting where its spight to try,
Has made me live to let me dye.
A Body that could never rest,
Since this ill Spirit it possest.

SOUL
What Magic could me thus confine
Within anothers Grief to pine?
Where whatsoever it complain,
I feel, that cannot feel, the pain.
And all my Care its self employes,

That to preserve, which me destroys:
Constrain'd not only to indure
Diseases, but, whats worse, the Cure:
And ready oft the Port to gain,
Am Shipwrackt into Health again.

BODY
But Physick yet could never reach
The Maladies Thou me dost teach;
Whom first the Cramp of Hope does Tear:
And then the Palsie Shakes of Fear.
The Pestilence of Love does heat:
Or Hatred's hidden Ulcer eat.
Joy's chearful Madness does perplex:
Or Sorrow's other Madness vex.
Which Knowledge forces me to know;
And Memory will not foregoe.
What but a Soul could have the wit
To build me up for Sin so fit?
So Architects do square and hew,
Green Trees that in the Forest grew.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20429355

May 28

The Enkindled Spring

D. H. Lawrence

This spring as it comes bursts up in bonfires green,
Wild puffing of emerald trees, and flame-filled bushes,
Thorn-blossom lifting in wreaths of smoke between
Where the wood fumes up and the watery, flickering rushes.

I am amazed at this spring, this conflagration
Of green fires lit on the soil of the earth, this blaze
Of growing, and sparks that puff in wild gyration,
Faces of people streaming across my gaze.

And I, what fountain of fire am I among
This leaping combustion of spring? My spirit is tossed
About like a shadow buffeted in the throng
Of flames, a shadow that's gone astray, and is lost.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20434381

May 29

Marching Men

Marjorie Pickthall

Under the level winter sky
I saw a thousand Christs go by.
They sang an idle song and free
As they went up to calvary.

Careless of eye and coarse of lip,
They marched in holiest fellowship.
That heaven might heal the world, they gave
Their earth-born dreams to deck the grave.

With souls unpurged and steadfast breath
They supped the sacrament of death.
And for each one, far off, apart,
Seven swords have rent a woman's heart.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20439384

May 30

Mediocrity in Love Rejected

Thomas Carew

Give me more love or more disdain;
The torrid, or the frozen zone,
Bring equal ease unto my pain;
The temperate affords me none;
Either extreme, of love, or hate,
Is sweeter than a calm estate.

Give me a storm; if it be love,
Like Danae in that golden show'r
I swim in pleasure; if it prove
Disdain, that torrent will devour
My vulture-hopes; and he's possess'd
Of heaven, that's but from hell releas'd.

Then crown my joys, or cure my pain;
Give me more love, or more disdain.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20444800

May 31

Leda and the Swan

William Butler Yeats

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?
And how can body, laid in that white rush,
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead.
        Being so caught up,
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,
Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20450389

June 1

✷

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares

Chidiock Tichborne

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares,
My feast of joy is but a dish of pain,
My crop of corn is but a field of tares,
And all my good is but vain hope of gain.
The day is gone and yet I saw no sun,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

The spring is past, and yet it hath not sprung,
The fruit is dead, and yet the leaves are green,
My youth is gone, and yet I am but young,
I saw the world, and yet I was not seen,
My thread is cut, and yet it was not spun,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

I sought my death and found it in my womb,
I lookt for life and saw it was a shade,
I trode the earth and knew it was my tomb,
And now I die, and now I am but made.
The glass is full, and now the glass is run,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20455660

June 2

The Doubt of Future Foes

Queen Elizabeth I

The doubt of future foes exiles my present joy,
And wit me warns to shun such snares as threaten mine annoy;
For falsehood now doth flow, and subjects' faith doth ebb,
Which should not be if reason ruled or wisdom weaved the web.
But clouds of joys untried do cloak aspiring minds,
Which turn to rain of late repent by changed course of winds.
The top of hope supposed the root upreared shall be,
And fruitless all their grafted guile, as shortly ye shall see.
The dazzled eyes with pride, which great ambition blinds,
Shall be unsealed by worthy wights whose foresight falsehood finds.
The daughter of debate that discord aye doth sow
Shall reap no gain where former rule still peace hath taught to know.
No foreign banished wight shall anchor in this port;
Our realm brooks not seditious sects, let them elsewhere resort.
My rusty sword through rest shall first his edge employ
To poll their tops that seek such change or gape for future joy.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20461293

June 3

I Am!

John Clare

I am—yet what I am none cares or knows;
My friends forsake me like a memory lost:
I am the self-consumer of my woes—
They rise and vanish in oblivious host,
Like shadows in love's frenzied stifled throes
And yet I am, and live—like vapours tossed

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dreams,
Where there is neither sense of life or joys,
But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;
Even the dearest that I loved the best
Are strange—nay, rather, stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man hath never trod
A place where woman never smiled or wept
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,
Untroubling and untroubled where I lie
The grass below—above the vaulted sky.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20465964

June 4

The Sick Rose

William Blake

O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20471296

June 5

Retirement

Henry Vaughan

Fresh fields and woods! the Earth's fair face,
God's foot-stool, and man's dwelling-place.
I ask not why the first Believer
Did love to be a country liver?
Who to secure pious content
Did pitch by groves and wells his tent;
Where he might view the boundless sky,
And all those glorious lights on high;
With flying meteors, mists and show'rs,
Subjected hills, trees, meads and flow'rs;
And ev'ry minute bless the King
And wise Creator of each thing.

I ask not why he did remove
To happy Mamre's holy grove,
Leaving the cities of the plain
To Lot and his successless train?
All various lusts in cities still
Are found; they are the thrones of ill;
The dismal sinks, where blood is spill'd,
Cages with much uncleanness fill'd.
But rural shades are the sweet fense
Of piety and innocence.
They are the Meek's calm region, where
Angels descend and rule the sphere,
Where heaven lies leiger, and the dove
Duly as dew, comes from above.
If Eden be on Earth at all,
'Tis that, which we the country call.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20477375

June 6

✷

Alone

Edgar Allan Poe

From childhood's hour I have not been
As others were—I have not seen
As others saw—I could not bring
My passions from a common spring—
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow—I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone—
And all I lov'd—I lov'd alone—
Then—in my childhood—in the dawn
Of a most stormy life—was drawn
From ev'ry depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still—
From the torrent, or the fountain—
From the red cliff of the mountain—
From the sun that 'round me roll'd
In its autumn tint of gold—
From the lightning in the sky
As it pass'd me flying by—
From the thunder, and the storm—
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view—

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20482090

June 7

✷

To His Fairest Valentine, Mrs. A.L.

Richard Lovelace

"Come, pretty birds, present your lays,
And learn to chaunt a goddess praise;
Ye wood-nymphs, let your voices be
Employ'd to serve her deity:
And warble forth, ye virgins nine,
Some music to my Valentine.

"Her bosom is love's paradise,
There is no heav'n but in her eyes;
She's chaster than the turtle-dove,
And fairer than the queen of love:
Yet all perfections do combine
To beautifie my Valentine.

"She's Nature's choicest cabinet,
Where honour, beauty, worth and wit
Are all united in her breast.
The graces claim an interest:
All virtues that are most divine
Shine clearest in my Valentine."

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20487275

June 8

✷

On my First Son

Ben Jonson

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;
My sin was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy.
Seven years tho' 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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20492275

June 9

On My First Daughter

Ben Jonson

Here lies, to each her parents' ruth,
Mary, the daughter of their youth;
Yet all heaven's gifts being heaven's due,
It makes the father less to rue.
At six months' end she parted hence
With safety of her innocence;
Whose soul heaven's queen, whose name she bears,
In comfort of her mother's tears,
Hath placed amongst her virgin-train:
Where, while that severed doth remain,
This grave partakes the fleshly birth;
Which cover lightly, gentle earth!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20497557

June 10

On the Grasshopper and Cricket

John Keats

The Poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20503325

June 11

Dust of Snow

Robert Frost

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20508674

June 12

England in 1819

Percy Bysshe Shelley

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying King;
Princes, the dregs of their dull race, who flow
Through public scorn,—mud from a muddy spring;
Rulers who neither see nor feel nor know,
But leechlike to their fainting country cling
Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow.
A people starved and stabbed in th' untilled field;
An army, whom liberticide and prey
Makes as a two-edged sword to all who wield;
Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay;
Religion Christless, Godless—a book sealed;
A senate, Time's worst statute, unrepealed—
Are graves from which a glorious Phantom may
Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20513939

June 13

✷

Farewell, ungrateful traitor!

John Dryden

Farewell ungrateful traitor,
Farewell my perjured swain,
Let never injured creature
Believe a man again.
The pleasure of possessing
Surpasses all expressing,
But 'tis too short a blessing,
And love too long a pain.

'Tis easy to deceive us
In pity of your pain,
But when we love you leave us
To rail at you in vain.
Before we have descried it,
There is no bliss beside it,
But she that once has tried it
Will never love again.

The passion you pretended
Was only to obtain,
But when the charm is ended
The charmer you disdain.
Your love by ours we measure
Till we have lost our treasure,
But dying is a pleasure,
When living is a pain.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20518699

June 14

The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter

Ezra Pound

After Li Po

While my hair was still cut straight across my forehead
I played about the front gate, pulling flowers.
You came by on bamboo stilts, playing horse,
You walked about my seat, playing with blue plums.
And we went on living in the village of Chōkan:
Two small people, without dislike or suspicion.
At fourteen I married My Lord you.
I never laughed, being bashful.
Lowering my head, I looked at the wall.
Called to, a thousand times, I never looked back.

At fifteen I stopped scowling,
I desired my dust to be mingled with yours
Forever and forever, and forever.
Why should I climb the look out?

At sixteen you departed
You went into far Ku-tō-en, by the river of swirling eddies,
And you have been gone five months.
The monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead.

You dragged your feet when you went out.
By the gate now, the moss is grown, the different mosses,
Too deep to clear them away!
The leaves fall early this autumn, in wind.
The paired butterflies are already yellow with August
Over the grass in the West garden;
They hurt me.

I grow older.
If you are coming down through the narrows of the river
Kiang,
Please let me know beforehand,
And I will come out to meet you
As far as Chō-fū-Sa.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20523477

June 15

The Pulley

George Herbert

When God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by,
"Let us," said he, "pour on him all we can.
Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
Contract into a span."

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure.
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

"For if I should," said he,
"Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature;
So both should losers be.

"Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast."

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20528151

June 16

Relic

Ted Hughes

I found this jawbone at the sea's edge:
There, crabs, dogfish, broken by the breakers or tossed
To flap for half an hour and turn to a crust
Continue the beginning. The deeps are cold:
In that darkness camaraderie does not hold.

Nothing touches but, clutching, devours. And the jaws,
Before they are satisfied or their stretched purpose
Slacken, go down jaws; go gnawn bare. Jaws
Eat and are finished and the jawbone comes to the beach:
This is the sea's achievement; with shells,
Verterbrae, claws, carapaces, skulls.

Time in the sea eats its tail, thrives, casts these
Indigestibles, the spars of purposes
That failed far from the surface. None grow rich
In the sea. This curved jawbone did not laugh
But gripped, gripped and is now a cenotaph.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20533441

June 17

Between Us Now

Thomas Hardy

Between us now and here—
Two thrown together
Who are not wont to wear
Life's flushest feather—

Who see the scenes slide past,
The daytimes dimming fast,
Let there be truth at last,
Even if despair.

So thoroughly and long
Have you now known me,
So real in faith and strong
Have I now shown me,
That nothing needs disguise
Further in any wise,
Or asks or justifies
A guarded tongue.

Face unto face, then, say,
Eyes my own meeting,
Is your heart far away,
Or with mine beating?
When false things are brought low,
And swift things have grown slow,
Feigning like froth shall go,
Faith be for aye.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20538264

June 18

The Windhover

Gerard Manley Hopkins

To Christ our Lord

I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding
Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
Stirred for a bird, – the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!

No wonder of it: shéer plód makes plough down sillion
Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20543610

June 19

The Mother Of God

William Butler Yeats

The threefold terror of love; a fallen flare
Through the hollow of an ear;
Wings beating about the room;
The terror of all terrors that I bore
The Heavens in my womb.

Had I not found content among the shows
Every common woman knows,
Chimney corner, garden walk,
Or rocky cistern where we tread the clothes
And gather all the talk?

What is this flesh I purchased with my pains,
This fallen star my milk sustains,
This love that makes my heart's blood stop
Or strikes a Sudden chill into my bones
And bids my hair stand up?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20548830

June 20

Work without Hope

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Lines Composed 21st February 1825

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And Hope without an object cannot live.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20553926

June 21

Hard Times

John Ashbery

Trust me. The world is run on a shoestring.
They have no time to return the calls in hell
And pay dearly for those wasted minutes. Somewhere
In the future it will filter down through all the proceedings

But by then it will be too late, the festive ambience
Will linger on but it won't matter. More or less
Succinctly they will tell you what we've all known for years:
That the power of this climate is only to conserve itself.

Whatever twists around it is decoration and can never
Be looked at as something isolated, apart. Get it? And
He flashed a mouthful of aluminum teeth there in the darkness
To tell however it gets down, that it does, at last.

Once they made the great trip to California
And came out of it flushed. And now every day
Will have to dispel the notion of being like all the others.
In time, it gets to stand with the wind, but by then the night is closed off.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20558680

June 22

✷

The More Loving One

W. H. Auden

Looking up at the stars, I know quite well
That, for all they care, I can go to hell,
But on earth indifference is the least
We have to dread from man or beast.

How should we like it were stars to burn
With a passion for us we could not return?
If equal affection cannot be,
Let the more loving one be me.

Admirer as I think I am
Of stars that do not give a damn,
I cannot, now I see them, say
I missed one terribly all day.

Were all stars to disappear or die,
I should learn to look at an empty sky
And feel its total dark sublime,
Though this might take me a little time.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20563993

June 23

Because I could not stop for Death

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 drew 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 – in the Ground –

Since then – 'tis Centuries – and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses' Heads
Were toward Eternity –

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20569139

June 24

✷

A Dream Within a Dream

Edgar Allan Poe

Take this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow —
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less gone?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand —
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep — while I weep!
O God! Can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is all that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20574369

June 25

The Asians Dying

W. S. Merwin

When the forests have been destroyed their darkness remains
The ash the great walker follows the possessors
Forever
Nothing they will come to is real
Nor for long
Over the watercourses
Like ducks in the time of the ducks
The ghosts of the villages trail in the sky
Making a new twilight

Rain falls into the open eyes of the dead
Again again with its pointless sound
When the moon finds them they are the color of everything

The nights disappear like bruises but nothing is healed
The dead go away like bruises
The blood vanishes into the poisoned farmlands
Pain the horizon
Remains
Overhead the seasons rock
They are paper bells
Calling to nothing living

The possessors move everywhere under Death their star
Like columns of smoke they advance into the shadows
Like thin flames with no light
They with no past
And fire their only future

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20579731

June 26

Valentine

Carol Ann Duffy

Not a red rose or a satin heart.

I give you an onion.
It is a moon wrapped in brown paper.
It promises light
like the careful undressing of love.

Here.
It will blind you with tears
like a lover.
It will make your reflection
a wobbling photo of grief.

I am trying to be truthful.

Not a cute card or a kissogram.

I give you an onion.
Its fierce kiss will stay on your lips,
possessive and faithful
as we are,
for as long as we are.

Take it.
Its platinum loops shrink to a wedding ring,
if you like.
Lethal.
Its scent will cling to your fingers,
cling to your knife.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20584708

June 27

✷

An Arundel Tomb

Philip Larkin

Side by side, their faces blurred,
The earl and countess lie in stone,
Their proper habits vaguely shown
As jointed armour, stiffened pleat,
And that faint hint of the absurd—
The little dogs under their feet.

Such plainness of the pre-baroque
Hardly involves the eye, until
It meets his left-hand gauntlet, still
Clasped empty in the other; and
One sees, with a sharp tender shock,
His hand withdrawn, holding her hand.

They would not think to lie so long.
Such faithfulness in effigy
Was just a detail friends would see:
A sculptor's sweet commissioned grace
Thrown off in helping to prolong
The Latin names around the base.

They would not guess how early in
Their supine stationary voyage
The air would change to soundless damage,
Turn the old tenantry away;
How soon succeeding eyes begin
To look, not read. Rigidly they

Persisted, linked, through lengths and breadths
Of time. Snow fell, undated. Light

Each summer thronged the glass. A bright
Litter of birdcalls strewed the same
Bone-riddled ground. And up the paths
The endless altered people came,

Washing at their identity.
Now, helpless in the hollow of
An unarmorial age, a trough
Of smoke in slow suspended skeins
Above their scrap of history,
Only an attitude remains:

Time has transfigured them into
Untruth. The stone fidelity
They hardly meant has come to be
Their final blazon, and to prove
Our almost-instinct almost true:
What will survive of us is love.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20589204

June 28

When We Two Parted

Lord Byron

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow –
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell in mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.

If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20594276

June 29

Blow, Bugle, Blow

Lord Tennyson

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20599712

June 30

How Do I Love Thee? (Sonnet 43)

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 every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20604766

July 1

The Lost Leader

Robert Browning

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allowed:
How all our copper had gone for his service!
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud!
We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their graves!
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
—He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

We shall march prospering,—not thro' his presence;
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire:
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!
Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!

Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20610103

July 2

Hysteria

T. S. Eliot

As she laughed I was aware of becoming involved in her laughter and being part of it, until her teeth were only accidental stars with a talent for squad-drill. I was drawn in by short gasps, inhaled at each momentary recovery, lost finally in the dark caverns of her throat, bruised by the ripple of unseen muscles. An elderly waiter with trembling hands was hurriedly spreading a pink and white checked cloth over the rusty green iron table, saying: "If the lady and gentleman wish to take their tea in the garden, if the lady and gentleman wish to take their tea in the garden ..." I decided that if the shaking of her breasts could be stopped, some of the fragments of the afternoon might be collected, and I concentrated my attention with careful subtlety to this end.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20616069

July 3

Sumer is icumin in

Anonymous

Sing, cuccu, nu. Sing, cuccu.
Sing, cuccu. Sing, cuccu, nu.

Sumer is i-cumin in—
Lhude sing, cuccu!
Groweth sed and bloweth med
And springth the wude nu.
Sing, cuccu!

Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu,
Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth—
Murie sing, cuccu!
Cuccu, cuccu,
Wel singes thu, cuccu.
Ne swik thu naver nu!

Modern English:
Sing, cuckoo, now; sing, cuckoo;
Sing, cuckoo; sing, cuckoo, now!

Summer has arrived,
Loudly sing, cuckoo!
The seed is growing
And the meadow is blooming,
And the wood is coming into leaf now,
Sing, cuckoo!

The ewe is bleating after her lamb,
The cow is lowing after her calf;
The bullock is prancing,
The billy-goat farting,

Sing merrily, cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo,
You sing well, cuckoo,
Never stop now.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20622315

July 4

The World Is Too Much With Us

William Wordsworth

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;—
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20626211

July 5

In Flanders Fields

John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
    That mark our place; and in the sky
    The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
    Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
    In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
    The torch; be yours to hold it high.
    If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
    In Flanders fields.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20632003

July 6

✷

A Red, Red Rose

Robert Burns

O my Luve is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luve is like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20636673

July 7

The Destruction of Sennacherib

Lord Byron

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20641683

July 8

Dover Beach

Matthew Arnold

The sea is calm tonight.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20646589

July 9

✷

On His Seventy-fifth Birthday

Walter Savage Landor

I strove with none; for none was worth my strife,
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20651246

July 10

Ars Poetica

Archibald MacLeish

A poem should be palpable and mute
As a globed fruit,

Dumb
As old medallions to the thumb,

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

A poem should be wordless
As the flight of birds.

*

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs,

Leaving, as the moon releases
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,
Memory by memory the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time
As the moon climbs.

*

A poem should be equal to:
Not true.

For all the history of grief
An empty doorway and a maple leaf.

For love

The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—

A poem should not mean
But be.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20656864

July 11

If I Could Tell You

W. H. Auden

Time will say nothing but I told you so,
Time only knows the price we have to pay;
If I could tell you I would let you know.

If we should weep when clowns put on their show,
If we should stumble when musicians play,
Time will say nothing but I told you so.

There are no fortunes to be told, although,
Because I love you more than I can say,
If I could tell you I would let you know.
The winds must come from somewhere when they blow,
There must be reasons why the leaves decay;
Time will say nothing but I told you so.

Perhaps the roses really want to grow,
The vision seriously intends to stay;
If I could tell you I would let you know.

Suppose the lions all get up and go,
And all the brooks and soldiers run away;
Will Time say nothing but I told you so?
If I could tell you I would let you know.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20661729

July 12

The Mower to the Glow-Worms

Andrew Marvell

Ye living lamps, by whose dear light
The nightingale does sit so late,
And studying all the summer night,
Her matchless songs does meditate;

Ye country comets, that portend
No war nor prince's funeral,
Shining unto no higher end
Than to presage the grass's fall;

Ye glow-worms, whose officious flame
To wand'ring mowers shows the way,
That in the night have lost their aim,
And after foolish fires do stray;

Your courteous lights in vain you waste,
Since Juliana here is come,
For she my mind hath so displac'd
That I shall never find my home.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20665915

July 13

To Celia

Ben Jonson

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not withered be.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20671262

July 14

✷

Sonnet 29: When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes

William Shakespeare

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
(Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth) sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20676127

July 15

✷

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain

Emily Dickinson

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,
And Mourners to and fro
Kept treading - treading - till it seemed
That Sense was breaking through -

And when they all were seated,
A Service, like a Drum -
Kept beating - beating - till I thought
My mind was going numb -

And then I heard them lift a Box
And creak across my Soul
With those same Boots of Lead, again,
Then Space - began to toll,

As all the Heavens were a Bell,
And Being, but an Ear,
And I, and Silence, some strange Race,
Wrecked, solitary, here -

And then a Plank in Reason, broke,
And I dropped down, and down -
And hit a World, at every plunge,
And Finished knowing - then -

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20681082

July 16

✷

At the round earth's imagined corners (Holy Sonnet 7)

John Donne

At the round earth's imagined corners, blow
Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go,
All whom the flood did, and fire shall, o'erthrow,
All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance, hath slain, and you whose eyes,
Shall behold God, and never taste death's woe.
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space;
For, if above all these, my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of thy grace,
When we are there. Here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent; for that's as good
As if thou'hadst seal'd my pardon with thy blood.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20686095

July 17

Picture of a Nativity

Geoffrey Hill

Sea-preserved, heaped with sea-spoils,
Ribs, keels, coral sores,
Detached faces, ephemeral oils,
Discharged on the world's outer shores,

A dumb child-king
Arrives at his right place; rests,
Undisturbed, among slack serpents; beasts
With claws flesh-buttered. In the gathering

Of bestial and common hardship
Artistic men appear to worship
And fall down; to recognize
Familiar tokens; believe their own eyes.

Above the marvel, each rigid head,
Angels, their unnatural wings displayed,
Freeze into an attitude
Recalling the dead.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20691800

July 18

A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London

Dylan Thomas

Never until the mankind making
Bird beast and flower
Fathering and all humbling darkness
Tells with silence the last light breaking
And the still hour
Is come of the sea tumbling in harness

And I must enter again the round
Zion of the water bead
And the synagogue of the ear of corn
Shall I let pray the shadow of a sound
Or sow my salt seed
In the least valley of sackcloth to mourn

The majesty and burning of the child's death.
I shall not murder
The mankind of her going with a grave truth
Nor blaspheme down the stations of the breath
With any further
Elegy of innocence and youth.

Deep with the first dead lies London's daughter,
Robed in the long friends,
The grains beyond age, the dark veins of her mother,
Secret by the unmourning water
Of the riding Thames.
After the first death, there is no other.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20695715

July 19

Love's Philosophy

Percy Bysshe Shelley

The fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one spirit meet and mingle.
Why not I with thine?—

See the mountains kiss high heaven
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:
What is all this sweet work worth
If thou kiss not me?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20700610

July 20

Miniver Cheevy

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 mediæval 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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20705914

July 21

Virtue

George Herbert

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky;
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie;
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20711506

July 22

She Was a Phantom of Delight

William Wordsworth

She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.
I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.
And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A Traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20716714

July 23

✷

MCMXIV

Philip Larkin

Those long uneven lines
Standing as patiently
As if they were stretched outside
The Oval or Villa Park,
The crowns of hats, the sun
On moustached archaic faces
Grinning as if it were all
An August Bank Holiday lark;

And the shut shops, the bleached
Established names on the sunblinds,
The farthings and sovereigns,
And dark-clothed children at play
Called after kings and queens,
The tin advertisements
For cocoa and twist, and the pubs
Wide open all day;

And the countryside not caring:
The place-names all hazed over
With flowering grasses, and fields
Shadowing Domesday lines
Under wheat's restless silence;
The differently-dressed servants
With tiny rooms in huge houses,
The dust behind limousines;

Never such innocence,
Never before or since,
As changed itself to past

Without a word – the men
Leaving the gardens tidy,
The thousands of marriages,
Lasting a little while longer:
Never such innocence again.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20722632

July 24

The Return

Ezra Pound

See, they return; ah, see the tentative
Movements, and the slow feet,
The trouble in the pace and the uncertain
Wavering!

See, they return, one, and by one,
With fear, as half-awakened;
As if the snow should hesitate
And murmur in the wind,
    and half turn back;
These were the "Wing'd-with-Awe,"
    inviolable.

Gods of the wingèd shoe!
With them the silver hounds,
    sniffing the trace of air!

Haie! Haie!
    These were the swift to harry;
These the keen-scented;
These were the souls of blood.

Slow on the leash,
    pallid the leash-men!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20729457

July 25

Trees

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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20732410

July 26

Idea 6: How many paltry, foolish, painted things

Michael Drayton

How many paltry, foolish, painted things,
That now in coaches trouble every street,
Shall be forgotten, whom no poet sings,
Ere they be well wrapp'd in their winding-sheet?
Where I to thee eternity shall give,
When nothing else remaineth of these days,
And queens hereafter shall be glad to live
Upon the alms of thy superfluous praise.
Virgins and matrons reading these my rhymes
Shall be so much delighted with thy story,
That they shall grieve they liv'd not in these times
To have seen thee, their sex's only glory.
So shalt thou fly above the vulgar throng,
Still to survive in my immortal song.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20737257

July 27

✷

Spring, the sweet spring

Thomas Nashe

Spring, the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king,
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing:
    Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay:
    Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet:
    Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to witta-woo!
    Spring, the sweet spring!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20743112

July 28

Sonnet 116

William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
O no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me prov'd,
I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20748354

July 29

First Love

John Clare

I ne'er was struck before that hour
With love so sudden and so sweet,
Her face it bloomed like a sweet flower
And stole my heart away complete.
My face turned pale as deadly pale,
My legs refused to walk away,
And when she looked, what could I ail?
My life and all seemed turned to clay.

And then my blood rushed to my face
And took my eyesight quite away,
The trees and bushes round the place
Seemed midnight at noonday.
I could not see a single thing,
Words from my eyes did start—
They spoke as chords do from the string,
And blood burnt round my heart.

Are flowers the winter's choice?
Is love's bed always snow?
She seemed to hear my silent voice,
Not love's appeals to know.
I never saw so sweet a face
As that I stood before.
My heart has left its dwelling-place
And can return no more.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20753744

July 30

Confessions

Robert Browning

What is he buzzing in my ears?
"Now that I come to die,
Do I view the world as a vale of tears?"
Ah, reverend sir, not I!

What I viewed there once, what I view again
Where the physic bottles stand
On the table's edge,—is a suburb lane,
With a wall to my bedside hand.

That lane sloped, much as the bottles do,
From a house you could descry
O'er the garden-wall; is the curtain blue
Or green to a healthy eye?

To mine, it serves for the old June weather
Blue above lane and wall;
And that farthest bottle labelled "Ether"
Is the house o'ertopping all.

At a terrace, somewhere near the stopper,
There watched for me, one June,
A girl: I know, sir, it's improper,
My poor mind's out of tune.

Only, there was a way... you crept
Close by the side, to dodge
Eyes in the house, two eyes except:
They styled their house "The Lodge."

What right had a lounger up their lane?
But, by creeping very close,

With the good wall's help,—their eyes might strain
And stretch themselves to Oes,

Yet never catch her and me together,
As she left the attic, there,
By the rim of the bottle labelled "Ether,"
And stole from stair to stair,

And stood by the rose-wreathed gate. Alas,
We loved, sir—used to meet:
How sad and bad and mad it was—
But then, how it was sweet!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20759452

July 31

✷

Choices

Tess Gallagher

I go to the mountain side
of the house to cut saplings,
and clear a view to snow
on the mountain. But when I look up,
saw in hand, I see a nest clutched in
the uppermost branches.
I don't cut that one.
I don't cut the others either.
Suddenly, in every tree,
an unseen nest
where a mountain
would be.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20765416

August 1

"The day is gone, and all its sweets are gone!"

John Keats

The day is gone, and all its sweets are gone!
Sweet voice, sweet lips, soft hand, and softer breast,
Warm breath, light whisper, tender semi-tone,
Bright eyes, accomplish'd shape, and lang'rous waist!
Faded the flower and all its budded charms,
Faded the sight of beauty from my eyes,
Faded the shape of beauty from my arms,
Faded the voice, warmth, whiteness, paradise –
Vanish'd unseasonably at shut of eve,
When the dusk holiday – or holinight
Of fragrant-curtain'd love begins to weave
The woof of darkness thick, for hid delight,
But, as I've read love's missal through to-day,
He'll let me sleep, seeing I fast and pray.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20769660

August 2

The Flowers

William Brighty Rands

When Love arose in heart and deed
To wake the world to greater joy,
'What can she give me now?' said Greed,
Who thought to win some costly toy.

He rose, he ran, he stoop'd, he clutch'd;
And soon the Flowers, that Love let fall,
In Greed's hot grasp were fray'd and smutch'd,
And Greed said, 'Flowers! Can this be all?'

He flung them down and went his way,
He cared no jot for thyme or rose;
But boys and girls came out to play,
And some took these and some took those—

Red, blue, and white, and green and gold;
And at their touch the dew return'd,
And all the bloom a thousandfold—
So red, so ripe, the roses burn'd!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20774513

August 3

Gascoigne's Lullaby

George Gascoigne

Sing lullaby, as women do,
Wherewith they bring their babes to rest;
And lullaby can I sing too,
As womanly as can the best.
With lullaby they still the child,
And if I be not much beguiled,
Full many wanton babes have I
Which must be stilled with lullaby.

First, lullaby my youthful years,
It is now time to go to bed;
For crooked age and hoary hairs
Have won the haven within my head.
With lullaby, then, youth, be still,
With lullaby content thy will,
Since courage quails and comes behind,
Go sleep, and so beguile thy mind.

Next, lullaby my gazing eyes
Which wonted were to glance apace.
For every glass may now suffice
To show the furrows in my face.
With lullaby, then, wink awhile,
With lullaby your looks beguile.
Let no fair face, nor beauty bright
Entice you eft with vain delight.

And lullaby, my wanton will:
Let reason's rule now reign thy thought,
Since all too late I find by skill
How dear I have thy fancies bought.

With lullaby now take thine ease,
With lullaby thy doubts appease
For trust to this, if thou be still,
My body shall obey thy will.

Eke lullaby my loving boy,
My little Robin, take thy rest.
Since age is cold and nothing coy,
Keep close thy coin, for so is best.
With lullaby be thou content,
With lullaby thy lusts relent.
Let others pay which hath mo pence;
Thou art too poor for such expense.

Thus, lullaby my youth, mine eyes,
My will, my ware and all that was.
I can no mo delays devise,
But welcome pain, let pleasure pass.
With lullaby now take your leave,
With lullaby your dreams deceive,
And when you rise with waking eye,
Remember Gascoigne's lullaby.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20779300

August 4

Jerusalem

William Blake

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon Englands mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On Englands pleasant pastures seen!

And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand:
Till we have built Jerusalem,
In Englands green & pleasant Land.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20784525

August 5

"The ribs and terrors in the whale"

Herman Melville

The ribs and terrors in the whale,
Arched over me a dismal gloom,
While all God's sun-lit waves rolled by,
And left me deepening down to doom.

I saw the opening maw of hell,
With endless pains and sorrows there;
Which none but they that feel can tell—
Oh, I was plunging to despair.

In black distress, I called my God,
When I could scarce believe him mine,
He bowed his ear to my complaints—
No more the whale did me confine.

With speed he flew to my relief,
As on a radiant dolphin borne;
Awful, yet bright, as lightening shone
The face of my Deliverer God.

My song for ever shall record
That terrible, that joyful hour;
I give the glory to my God,
His all the mercy and the power.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20790040

August 6

On the Cards and Dice

Sir Walter Ralegh

Before the sixth day of the next new year,
Strange wonders in this kingdom shall appear:
Four kings shall be assembled in this isle,
Where they shall keep great tumult for awhile.
Many men then shall have an end of crosses,
And many likewise shall sustain great losses;
Many that now full joyful are and glad,
Shall at that time be sorrowful and sad;
Full many a Christian's heart shall quake for fear,
The dreadful sound of trump when he shall hear.
Dead bones shall then be tumbled up and down,
In every city and in every town.
By day or night this tumult shall not cease,
Until an herald shall proclaim a peace;
An herald strong, the like was never born,
Whose very beard is flesh and mouth is horn.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20795025

August 7

A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown

Walt Whitman

A march in the ranks hard-prest, and the road unknown,
A route through a heavy wood with muffled steps in the darkness,
Our army foil'd with loss severe, and the sullen remnant retreating,
Till after midnight glimmer upon us the lights of a dim-lighted building,
We come to an open space in the woods, and halt by the dim-lighted building,
'Tis a large old church at the crossing roads, now an impromptu hospital
Entering but for a minute I see a sight beyond all the pictures and poems ever made,
Shadows of deepest, deepest black, just lit by moving candles and lamps,
And by one great pitchy torch stationary with wild red flame and clouds of smoke,
By these, crowds, groups of forms vaguely I see on the floor, some in the pews laid down,
At my feet more distinctly a soldier, a mere lad, in danger of bleeding to death, (he is shot in the abdomen,)
I stanch the blood temporarily, (the youngster's face is white as a lily,)
Then before I depart I sweep my eyes o'er the scene fain to absorb it all,
Faces, varieties, postures beyond description, most in obscurity, some of them dead,
Surgeons operating, attendants holding lights, the smell of ether, the odor of blood,

The crowd, O the crowd of the bloody forms, the yard outside also fill'd,
Some on the bare ground, some on planks or stretchers, some in the death-spasm sweating,
An occasional scream or cry, the doctor's shouted orders or calls,
The glisten of the little steel instruments catching the glint of the torches,
These I resume as I chant, I see again the forms, I smell the odor,
Then hear outside the orders given, Fall in, my men, fall in;
But first I bend to the dying lad, his eyes open, a half-smile gives he me,
Then the eyes close, calmly close, and I speed forth to the darkness,
Resuming, marching, ever in darkness marching, on in the ranks,
The unknown road still marching.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20801341

August 8

Sea-Fever

John Masefield

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20805438

August 9

Do Not Stand At My Grave And Weep

Clare Harner

Do not stand
By my grave, and weep.
I am not there,
I do not sleep—
I am the thousand winds that blow
I am the diamond glints in snow
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
I am the gentle, autumn rain.
As you awake with morning's hush,
I am the swift, up-flinging rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight,
I am the day transcending night.
Do not stand
By my grave, and cry—
I am not there,
I did not die.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20810151

August 10

Come, come thou bleak December wind

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Come, come thou bleak December wind,
And blow the dry leaves from the tree!
Flash, like a Love-thought, thro' me, Death
And take a Life that wearies me.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20814796

August 11

Requiem for the Croppies

Seamus Heaney

The pockets of our greatcoats full of barley...
No kitchens on the run, no striking camp...
We moved quick and sudden in our own country.
The priest lay behind ditches with the tramp.
A people hardly marching... on the hike...
We found new tactics happening each day:
We'd cut through reins and rider with the pike
And stampede cattle into infantry,
Then retreat through hedges where cavalry must be thrown.
Until... on Vinegar Hill... the final conclave.
Terraced thousands died, shaking scythes at cannon.
The hillside blushed, soaked in our broken wave.
They buried us without shroud or coffin
And in August... the barley grew up out of our grave.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20819786

August 12

Jabberwocky

Lewis Carroll

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

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

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

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

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

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:

All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20824691

August 13

One Art

Elizabeth Bishop

The art of losing isn't hard to master;
so many things seem filled with the intent
to be lost that their loss is no disaster.

Lose something every day. Accept the fluster
of lost door keys, the hour badly spent.
The art of losing isn't hard to master.

Then practice losing farther, losing faster:
places, and names, and where it was you meant
to travel. None of these will bring disaster.

I lost my mother's watch. And look! my last, or
next-to-last, of three loved houses went.
The art of losing isn't hard to master.

I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster,
some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent.
I miss them, but it wasn't a disaster.

—Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture
I love) I shan't have lied. It's evident
the art of losing's not too hard to master
though it may look like (Write it!) like disaster.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20830238

August 14

Binsey Poplars

Gerard Manley Hopkins

felled 1879

My aspens dear, whose airy cages quelled,
Quelled or quenched in leaves the leaping sun,
All felled, felled, are all felled;
Of a fresh and following folded rank
Not spared, not one
That dandled a sandalled
Shadow that swam or sank
On meadow & river & wind-wandering weed-winding bank.

O if we but knew what we do
When we delve or hew —
Hack and rack the growing green!
Since country is so tender
To touch, her being só slender,
That, like this sleek and seeing ball
But a prick will make no eye at all,
Where we, even where we mean
To mend her we end her,
When we hew or delve:
After-comers cannot guess the beauty been.
Ten or twelve, only ten or twelve
Strokes of havoc unselve
The sweet especial scene,
Rural scene, a rural scene,
Sweet especial rural scene.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20836902

August 15

Nature is what we see

Emily Dickinson

"Nature" is what we see
The Hill—the Afternoon
Squirrel—Eclipse—the Bumble bee
Nay—Nature is Heaven
Nature is what we hear
The Bobolink—the Sea
Thunder—the Cricket
Nay—Nature is Harmony
Nature is what we know
Yet have no art to say
So impotent Our Wisdom is
To her Simplicity

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20841164

August 16

Dream Song 29

John Berryman

There sat down, once, a thing on Henry's heart
só heavy, if he had a hundred years
& more, & weeping, sleepless, in all them time
Henry could not make good.
Starts again always in Henry's ears
the little cough somewhere, an odour, a chime.

And there is another thing he has in mind
like a grave Sienese face a thousand years
would fail to blur the still profiled reproach of. Ghastly,
with open eyes, he attends, blind.
All the bells say: too late. This is not for tears;
thinking.

But never did Henry, as he thought he did,
end anyone and hacks her body up
and hide the pieces, where they may be found.
He knows: he went over everyone, & nobody's missing.
Often he reckons, in the dawn, them up.
Nobody is ever missing.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20846138

August 17

Early Death

Hartley Coleridge

She pass'd away like morning dew
Before the sun was high;
So brief her time, she scarcely knew
The meaning of a sigh.

As round the rose its soft perfume,
Sweet love around her floated;
Admired she grew?while mortal doom
Crept on, unfear'd, unnoted.

Love was her guardian Angel here,
But Love to Death resign'd her;
Tho' Love was kind, why should we fear
But holy Death is kinder?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20851461

August 18

Music when Soft Voices Die

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the belovèd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20856402

August 19

The Voice

Thomas Hardy

Woman much missed, how you call to me, call to me,
Saying that now you are not as you were
When you had changed from the one who was all to me,
But as at first, when our day was fair.

Can it be you that I hear? Let me view you, then,
Standing as when I drew near to the town
Where you would wait for me: yes, as I knew you then,
Even to the original air-blue gown!

Or is it only the breeze, in its listlessness
Travelling across the wet mead to me here,
You being ever dissolved to wan wistlessness,
Heard no more again far or near?

Thus I; faltering forward,
Leaves around me falling,
Wind oozing thin through the thorn from norward,
And the woman calling.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20862398

August 20

Street Musicians

John Ashbery

One died, and the soul was wrenched out
Of the other in life, who, walking the streets
Wrapped in an identity like a coat, sees on and on
The same corners, volumetrics, shadows
Under trees. Farther than anyone was ever
Called, through increasingly suburban airs
And ways, with autumn falling over everything:
The plush leaves the chattels in barrels
Of an obscure family being evicted
Into the way it was, and is. The other beached
Glimpses of what the other was up to:
Revelations at last. So they grew to hate and forget each
other.

So I cradle this average violin that knows
Only forgotten showtunes, but argues
The possibility of free declamation anchored
To a dull refrain, the year turning over on itself
In November, with the spaces among the days
More literal, the meat more visible on the bone.
Our question of a place of origin hangs
Like smoke: how we picnicked in pine forests,
In coves with the water always seeping up, and left
Our trash, sperm and excrement everywhere, smeared
On the landscape, to make of us what we could.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20866437

August 21

Sonnet 94

William Shakespeare

They that have power to hurt and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow:
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet
Though to itself it only live and die,
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20873421

August 22

✷

Idea 61: Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part

Michael Drayton

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part.
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies;
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes—
Now, if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20877079

August 23

Delight in Disorder

Robert Herrick

A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness;
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction;
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher;
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribands to flow confusedly;
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat;
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility:
Do more bewitch me, than when art
Is too precise in every part.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20882078

August 24

The Character of a Happy Life

Henry Wotton

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are;
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good;

Who hath his life from rumours freed;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend;

—This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall:
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20887189

August 25

There Will Come Soft Rains

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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20892218

August 26

Anecdote of the Jar

Wallace Stevens

I placed a jar in Tennessee,
And round it was, upon a hill.
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,
And sprawled around, no longer wild.
The jar was round upon the ground
And tall and of a port in air.

It took dominion everywhere.
The jar was gray and bare.
It did not give of bird or bush,
Like nothing else in Tennessee.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20897375

August 27

This is my play's last scene (Holy Sonnet 6)

John Donne

This is my play's last scene; here heavens appoint
My pilgrimage's last mile; and my race,
Idly, yet quickly run, hath this last pace,
My span's last inch, my minute's latest point;
And gluttonous death will instantly unjoint
My body and my soul, and I shall sleep a space;
But my'ever-waking part shall see that face
Whose fear already shakes my every joint.
Then, as my soul to'heaven, her first seat, takes flight,
And earth-born body in the earth shall dwell,
So fall my sins, that all may have their right,
To where they'are bred, and would press me, to hell.
Impute me righteous, thus purg'd of evil,
For thus I leave the world, the flesh, the devil.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20903563

August 28

The Virgin

William Wordsworth

Mother! whose virgin bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied.
Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost;
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast;
Thy image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible Power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20908354

August 29

Invictus

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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20912222

August 30

These Are The Clouds

William Butler Yeats

These are the clouds about the fallen sun,
The majesty that shuts his burning eye:
The weak lay hand on what the strong has done,
Till that be tumbled that was lifted high
And discord follow upon unison,
And all things at one common level lie.
And therefore, friend, if your great race were run
And these things came, So much the more thereby
Have you made greatness your companion,
Although it be for children that you sigh:
These are the clouds about the fallen sun,
The majesty that shuts his burning eye.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20916181

August 31

All Things will Die

Lord Tennyson

Clearly the blue river chimes in its flowing
    Under my eye;
Warmly and broadly the south winds are blowing
    Over the sky.
One after another the white clouds are fleeting;
Every heart this May morning in joyance is beating
    Full merrily;
    Yet all things must die.
The stream will cease to flow;
The wind will cease to blow;
The clouds will cease to fleet;
The heart will cease to beat;
    For all things must die.
    All things must die.
Spring will come never more.
    O, vanity!
Death waits at the door.
See! our friends are all forsaking
The wine and the merrymaking.
We are call'd–we must go.
Laid low, very low,
In the dark we must lie.
The merry glees are still;
The voice of the bird
Shall no more be heard,
Nor the wind on the hill.
    O, misery!
Hark! death is calling

While I speak to ye,
The jaw is falling,
The red cheek paling,
The strong limbs failing;
Ice with the warm blood mixing;
The eyeballs fixing.
Nine times goes the passing bell:
Ye merry souls, farewell.
    The old earth
    Had a birth,
    As all men know,
    Long ago.
And the old earth must die.
So let the warm winds range,
And the blue wave beat the shore;
For even and morn
Ye will never see
Thro' eternity.
All things were born.
Ye will come never more,
For all things must die.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20920586

September 1

Spring and Fall

Gerard Manley Hopkins

to a young child

Márgarét, áre you gríeving
Over Goldengrove unleaving?
Leáves like the things of man, you
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
Ah! ás the heart grows older
It will come to such sights colder
By and by, nor spare a sigh
Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;
And yet you wíll weep and know why.
Now no matter, child, the name:
Sórrow's spríngs áre the same.
Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
It ís the blight man was born for,
It is Margaret you mourn for.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20924992

September 2

✷

There's a certain Slant of light

Emily Dickinson

There's a certain Slant of light,
Winter Afternoons –
That oppresses, like the Heft
Of Cathedral Tunes –

Heavenly Hurt, it gives us –
We can find no scar,
But internal difference –
Where the Meanings, are –

None may teach it – Any –
'Tis the seal Despair –
An imperial affliction
Sent us of the Air –

When it comes, the Landscape listens –
Shadows – hold their breath –
When it goes, 'tis like the Distance
On the look of Death –

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20929941

September 3

The Apparition

John Donne

When by thy scorn, O murd'ress, I am dead
    And that thou think'st thee free
From all solicitation from me,
Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,
And thee, feign'd vestal, in worse arms shall see;
Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,
And he, whose thou art then, being tir'd before,
Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think
    Thou call'st for more,
And in false sleep will from thee shrink;
And then, poor aspen wretch, neglected thou
Bath'd in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lie
    A verier ghost than I.
What I will say, I will not tell thee now,
Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,
I'had rather thou shouldst painfully repent,
Than by my threat'nings rest still innocent.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20934294

September 4

For A Picture

Algernon Charles Swinburne

That nose is out of drawing. With a gasp,
She pants upon the passionate lips that ache
With the red drain of her own mouth, and make
A monochord of colour. Like an asp,
One lithe lock wriggles in his rutilant grasp.
Her bosom is an oven of myrrh, to bake
Love's white warm shewbread to a browner cake.
The lock his fingers clench has burst its hasp.
The legs are absolutely abominable.
Ah! what keen overgust of wild-eyed woes
Flags in that bosom, flushes in that nose?
Nay! Death sets riddles for desire to spell,
Responsive. What red hem earth's passion sews,
But may be ravenously unripped in hell?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20939797

September 5

A Broken Appointment

Thomas Hardy

You did not come,
And marching Time drew on, and wore me numb,—
Yet less for loss of your dear presence there
Than that I thus found lacking in your make
That high compassion which can overbear
Reluctance for pure lovingkindness' sake
Grieved I, when, as the hope-hour stroked its sum,
You did not come.

You love not me,
And love alone can lend you loyalty;
–I know and knew it. But, unto the store
Of human deeds divine in all but name,
Was it not worth a little hour or more
To add yet this: Once you, a woman, came
To soothe a time-torn man; even though it be
You love not me?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20943735

September 6

Lines on Cambridge of 1830

Lord Tennyson

Therefore your Halls, your ancient Colleges,
Your portals statued with old kings and queens,
Your gardens, myriad-volumed libraries.
Wax-lighted chapels, and rich carven screens,
Your doctors, and your proctors, and your deans,
Shall not avail you, when the Day-beam sports
New-risen o'er awaken'd Albion. No!
Nor yet your solemn organ-pipes that blow
Melodious thunders thro' your vacant courts
At noon and eve, because your manner sorts
Not with this age wherefrom ye stand apart.
Because the lips of little children preach
Against you, you that do profess to teach
And teach us nothing, feeding not the heart

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20948096

September 7

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace

Sir Philip Sidney

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20953536

September 8

✷

A Lament

Percy Bysshe Shelley

O world! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—Oh, never more!

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight;
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—Oh, never more!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20958720

September 9

A Farewell

Lord Tennyson

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver:
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river:
Nowhere by thee my steps shall be
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree
And here thine aspen shiver;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20963189

September 10

Queen

Joanne Boyle

Phillip came to me today,
and said it was time to go.
I looked at him and smiled,
as I whispered that "I know"

I then turned and looked behind me,
and seen I was asleep.
All my Family were around me,
and I could hear them weep.

I gently touched each shoulder,
with Phillip by my side.
Then I turned away and walked,
with My Angel guide.

Phillip held my hand,
as he lead the way,
to a world where Kings and Queens,
are Monarchs every day.

I was given a crown to wear
or a Halo known by some.
The difference is up here,
they are worn by everyone.

I felt a sense of peace,
my reign had seen its end.
70 years I had served my Country,
as the peoples friend.

Thank you for the years,
for all your time and love.

Now I am one of two again,
in our Palace up above.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20968698

September 11

A Child's Laughter

Algernon Charles Swinburne

All the bells of heaven may ring,
All the birds of heaven may sing,
All the wells on earth may spring,
All the winds on earth may bring
All sweet sounds together—
Sweeter far than all things heard,
Hand of harper, tone of bird,
Sound of woods at sundawn stirred,
Welling water's winsome word,
Wind in warm wan weather,

One thing yet there is, that none
Hearing ere its chime be done
Knows not well the sweetest one
Heard of man beneath the sun,
Hoped in heaven hereafter;
Soft and strong and loud and light,
Very sound of very light
Heard from morning's rosiest height,
When the soul of all delight
Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome rolled
Never forth such notes, nor told
Hours so blithe in tones so bold,
As the radiant mouth of gold
Here that rings forth heaven.
If the golden-crested wren
Were a nightingale—why, then,
Something seen and heard of men

Might be half as sweet as when
Laughs a child of seven.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20973420

September 12

To an Athlete Dying Young

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.

Today, 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 its 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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20977970

September 13

Hunt & Night Spins in its Wake

Toby Martinez de las Rivas

Come back through this glass darkly to a day
pell mell with leaves: silvery, emerald,
winged, tumbling: & the sun in its black sky.
Little man, as if asleep in the grass –
shadows touch the earth & lift as quickly,
the oceans of ash glitter & are swept
into sodden foaming peaks, troughs of cloud
deepen & loom above you as mercy may –

& I see again the whole legendary
estate of my life condensed to this moment's
triumph – crudely sensual, as if drowning
in amber, golden mop of hair ablow –
as the white rat breaks into its sunlight
& my wadcutter is singing through the air.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20982249

September 14

Carnivorous

Lucie Brock-Broido

I was lying loose from God. Strange is it not best
Beloved, in the New World, in this skinny life,

Intemperate with chance, my spirit quickens
For the fall's estate. In India, the half

Hour is the hour, we were like that then—
Jammed wrong & wrong in the diurnal

Mangy chambers of our carnall
Hearts, the rose robes rustling loose as velvet

Curtains at the stage prow, passing
Into the strange salt air of an Indian

Ocean, hoarding kindling, heading
West with hours, later than we might

Have known, counting tins of meats & oil left,
If they should lose or last the night.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20987275

September 15

The Conqueror Worm

Edgar Allan Poe

Lo! 't is a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
Invisible Wo!

That motley drama—oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout,
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!

It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20991327

September 16

Amoretti: Sonnet 54

Edmund Spenser

Of this worlds theatre in which we stay,
My love like the spectator ydly sits
Beholding me that all the pageants play,
Disguysing diversly my troubled wits.
Sometimes I joy when glad occasion fits,
And mask in myrth lyke to a comedy:
Soone after when my joy to sorrow flits,
I waile and make my woes a tragedy.
Yet she, beholding me with constant eye,
Delights not in my merth nor rues my smart:
But when I laugh she mocks, and when I cry
She laughs and hardens evermore her heart.
What then can move her? if nor merth nor mone,
She is no woman, but a senceless stone.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S20996365

September 17

The Song of Wandering Aengus

William Butler Yeats

I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread;
And when white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor
I went to blow the fire a-flame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And someone called me by my name:
It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossom in her hair
Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
And kiss her lips and take her hands;
And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done,
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21002163

September 18

Twelfth Song of Thunder

Anonymous

The voice that beautifies the land!
The voice above,
The voice of thunder
Within the dark cloud
Again and again it sounds,
The voice that beautifies the land.

The voice that beautifies the land!
The voice below,
The voice of the grasshopper
Among the plants
Again and again it sounds,
The voice that beautifies the land.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21008139

September 19

The Ecchoing Green

William Blake

The sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-lark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around,
To the bells' cheerful sound.
While our sports shall be seen
On the Ecchoing Green.

Old John, with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk,
They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say.
'Such, such were the joys.
When we all girls & boys,
In our youth-time were seen,
On the Ecchoing Green.'

Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end:
Round the laps of their mothers,
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest;

And sport no more seen,
On the darkening Green.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21011415

September 20

Sonnet 73: That time of year thou mayst in me behold

William Shakespeare

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21016619

September 21

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now

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 threescore 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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21021382

September 22

The Beautiful Changes

Richard Wilbur

One wading a Fall meadow finds on all sides
The Queen Anne's Lace lying like lilies
On water; it glides
So from the walker, it turns
Dry grass to a lake, as the slightest shade of you
Valleys my mind in fabulous blue Lucernes.

The beautiful changes as a forest is changed
By a chameleon's tuning his skin to it;
As a mantis, arranged
On a green leaf, grows
Into it, makes the leaf leafier, and proves
Any greenness is deeper than anyone knows.

Your hands hold roses always in a way that says
They are not only yours; the beautiful changes
In such kind ways,
Wishing ever to sunder
Things and things' selves for a second finding, to lose
For a moment all that it touches back to wonder.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21026396

September 23

✷

To Autumn

John Keats

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, Where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn

Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21030924

September 24

Song of the Witchess

William Shakespeare

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and caldron bubble.
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and caldron bubble.
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21035377

September 25

My Heart Leaps Up

William Wordsworth

My heart leaps up when I behold
    A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
    Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21040794

September 26

To a Shade

William Butler Yeats

If you have revisited the town, thin Shade,
Whether to look upon your monument
(I wonder if the builder has been paid)
Or happier-thoughted when the day is spent
To drink of that salt breath out of the sea
When grey gulls flit about instead of men,
And the gaunt houses put on majesty:
Let these content you and be gone again;
For they are at their old tricks yet.

A man
Of your own passionate serving kind who had brought
In his full hands what, had they only known,
Had given their children's children loftier thought,
Sweeter emotion, working in their veins
Like gentle blood, has been driven from the place,
And insult heaped upon him for his pains,
And for his open-handedness, disgrace;
Your enemy, an old foul mouth, had set
The pack upon him.

Go, unquiet wanderer,
And gather the Glasnevin coverlet
About your head till the dust stops your ear,
The time for you to taste of that salt breath
And listen at the corners has not come;
You had enough of sorrow before death—
Away, away! You are safer in the tomb.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21044701

September 27

The Air Plant

Hart Crane

Grand Cayman

This tuft that thrives on saline nothingness,
Inverted octopus with heavenward arms
Thrust parching from a palm-bole hard by the cove—
A bird almost—of almost bird alarms,

Is pulmonary to the wind that jars
Its tentacles, horrific in their lurch.
The lizard's throat, held bloated for a fly,
Balloons but warily from this throbbing perch.

The needles and hack-saws of cactus bleed
A milk of earth when stricken off the stalk;
But this,—defenseless, thornless, sheds no blood,
Almost no shadow—but the air's thin talk.

Angelic Dynamo! Ventriloquist of the Blue!
While beachward creeps the shark-swept Spanish Main
By what conjunctions do the winds appoint
Its apotheosis, at last—the hurricane!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21049325

September 28

The Dying Christian to his Soul

Alexander Pope

Vital spark of heav'nly flame!
Quit, O quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heav'n opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21053524

September 29

A Song of a Young Lady to Her Ancient Lover

John Wilmot Earl of Rochester

Ancient person, for whom I
All the flattering youth defy,
Long be it ere thou grow old,
Aching, shaking, crazy, cold;
But still continue as thou art,
Ancient person of my heart.

On thy withered lips and dry,
Which like barren furrows lie,
Brooding kisses I will pour
Shall thy youthful [heat] restore
(Such kind showers in autumn fall,
And a second spring recall);
Nor from thee will ever part,
Ancient person of my heart.

Thy nobler part, which but to name
In our sex would be counted shame,
By age's frozen grasp possessed,
From [his] ice shall be released,
And soothed by my reviving hand,
In former warmth and vigor stand.
All a lover's wish can reach
For thy joy my love shall teach,
And for they pleasure shall improve
All that art can add to love.
Yet still I love thee without art,
Ancient person of my heart.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21060028

September 30

✷

Sonnet 19: On His Blindness

John Milton

When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in the dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide,
Doth d exact day labour, light denied?
I fondly ask; but patience to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, d doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts, who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best, his state
Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21062814

October 1

Spleen

T. S. Eliot

Sunday: this satisfied procession
Of definite Sunday faces;
Bonnets, silk hats, and conscious graces
In repetition that displaces
Your mental self-possession
By this unwarranted digression.

Evening, lights, and tea!
Children and cats in the alley;
Dejection unable to rally
Against this dull conspiracy.

And Life, a little bald and gray,
Languid, fastidious, and bland,
Waits, hat and gloves in hand,
Punctilious of tie and suit
(Somewhat impatient of delay)
    On the doorstep of the Absolute.

Link: Not archived

October 2

On the Sea

John Keats

It keeps eternal whisperings around
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell
Gluts twice ten thousand Caverns, till the spell
Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,
That scarcely will the very smallest shell
Be moved for days from where it sometime fell.
When last the winds of Heaven were unbound.
Oh, ye! who have your eyeballs vexed and tired,
Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea;
Oh ye! whose ears are dinned with uproar rude,
Or fed too much with cloying melody—
Sit ye near some old Cavern's Mouth and brood,
Until ye start, as if the sea nymphs quired!

Link: Not archived

October 3

Solomon Grundy

Alice Oswald

Born on Monday and a tiny
world-containing grain of light
passed through each eye like heaven through a needle.

And on Tuesday
he screamed for a small ear in which to hide.

He rolled on Wednesday, rolled his whole body
full of immense salt spaces, slowly
from one horizon to the other.

And on Thursday, trembling, crippled,
broke beyond his given strength and crawled.

And on Friday he stood upright.

And on Saturday he tested a footstep
and the sky came down and alit on his shoulder
full of various languages in which one bird doesn't answer
to another.

And on Sunday he dreamed he was flying
and his mind grew gold watching the moon
and he began to sing to the brink of speaking

Link: Not archived

October 4

For St. Jerome

Paul Farley

Guardian of the date-stamp and card catalogue,
keeper of knowledge, and a staff notice-board
pinned with drunks and men who lick the atlases,
go with me while I Tipp-Ex-out the bogies
and spray Glade in the newspaper section.
Curmudgeon, teach me how to smile while fining
the sinners who have lately been in hospital,
who were struck dumb by lightning, or forgot.
Teach me to bear their crumbs and bookmarks
with the fortitude for which you are not famous:
the bus tickets, postcards, rashers of bacon
and once - give me strength - a knotted condom.
Gatekeeper, watch over books on loan;
their months of purgatory spent in bath steam
or under beds. Watch over those abandoned
on bus seats or park benches. Heal the torn.
Take them back from houses with the measles.
Inform Environmental Health at once.
And teach me to work with an abrupt demeanour,
And the martyrdom of the index, which was yours;
to speak out in the silence of your feast day
whose widespread celebration is long overdue.

Link: Not archived

October 5

The World Below the Brine

Walt Whitman

The world below the brine,
Forests at the bottom of the sea, the branches and leaves,
Sea-lettuce, vast lichens, strange flowers and seeds, the thick tangle, openings, and pink turf,
Different colors, pale gray and green, purple, white, and gold, the play of light through the water,
Dumb swimmers there among the rocks, coral, gluten, grass, rushes, and the aliment of the swimmers,
Sluggish existences grazing there suspended, or slowly crawling close to the bottom,
The sperm-whale at the surface blowing air and spray, or disporting with his flukes,
The leaden-eyed shark, the walrus, the turtle, the hairy sea-leopard, and the sting-ray,
Passions there, wars, pursuits, tribes, sight in those ocean-depths, breathing that thick-breathing air, as so many do,
The change thence to the sight here, and to the subtle air breathed by beings like us who walk this sphere,
The change onward from ours to that of beings who walk other spheres.

Link: Not archived

October 6

The Embankment

T. E. Hulme

(The fantasia of a fallen gentleman on a cold, bitter night.)

Once, in finesse of fiddles found I ecstasy,
In the flash of gold heels on the hard pavement.
Now see I
That warmth's the very stuff of poesy.
Oh, God, make small
The old star-eaten blanket of the sky,
That I may fold it round me and in comfort lie.

Link: Not archived

October 7

Insomnia

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Thin are the night-skirts left behind
By daybreak hours that onward creep,
And thin, alas! the shred of sleep
That wavers with the spirit's wind:
But in half-dreams that shift and roll
And still remember and forget,
My soul this hour has drawn your soul
A little nearer yet.

Our lives, most dear, are never near,
Our thoughts are never far apart,
Though all that draws us heart to heart
Seems fainter now and now more clear.
To-night Love claims his full control,
And with desire and with regret
My soul this hour has drawn your soul
A little nearer yet.

Is there a home where heavy earth
Melts to bright air that breathes no pain,
Where water leaves no thirst again
And springing fire is Love's new birth?
If faith long bound to one true goal
May there at length its hope beget,
My soul that hour shall draw your soul
For ever nearer yet.

Link: Not archived

October 8

Sonnet 130: My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun

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 damasked, 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.

Link: Not archived

October 9

The Road Not Taken

Robert Frost

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

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

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

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

Link: Not archived

October 10

They Flee From Me

Sir Thomas Wyatt

They flee from me that sometime did me seek
With naked foot, stalking in my chamber.
I have seen them gentle, tame, and meek,
That now are wild and do not remember
That sometime they put themself in danger
To take bread at my hand; and now they range,
Busily seeking with a continual change.

Thanked be fortune it hath been otherwise
Twenty times better; but once in special,
In thin array after a pleasant guise,
When her loose gown from her shoulders did fall,
And she me caught in her arms long and small;
Therewithall sweetly did me kiss
And softly said, "Dear heart, how like you this?"

It was no dream: I lay broad waking.
But all is turned thorough my gentleness
Into a strange fashion of forsaking;
And I have leave to go of her goodness,
And she also, to use newfangleness.
But since that I so kindly am served
I would fain know what she hath deserved.

Link: Not archived

October 11

The House of Life: 71. The Choice, I

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Eat thou and drink; to-morrow thou shalt die.
Surely the earth, that's wise being very old,
Needs not our help. Then loose me, love, and hold
Thy sultry hair up from my face; that I
May pour for thee this golden wine, brim-high,
Till round the glass thy fingers glow like gold.
We'll drown all hours: thy song, while hours are toll'd,
Shall leap, as fountains veil the changing sky.

Now kiss, and think that there are really those,
My own high-bosom'd beauty, who increase
Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might choose our way!
Through many years they toil; then on a day
They die not,—for their life was death,—but cease;
And round their narrow lips the mould falls close.

Link: Not archived

October 12

Disillusionment of Ten O'Clock

Wallace Stevens

The houses are haunted
By white night-gowns.
None are green,
Or purple with green rings,
Or green with yellow rings,
Or yellow with blue rings.
None of them are strange,
With socks of lace
And beaded ceintures.
People are not going
To dream of baboons and periwinkles.
Only, here and there, an old sailor,
Drunk and asleep in his boots,
Catches tigers
In red weather.

Link: Not archived

October 13

September 1913

William Butler Yeats

What need you, being come to sense,
But fumble in a greasy till
And add the halfpence to the pence
And prayer to shivering prayer, until
You have dried the marrow from the bone;
For men were born to pray and save:
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Yet they were of a different kind,
The names that stilled your childish play,
They have gone about the world like wind,
But little time had they to pray
For whom the hangman's rope was spun,
And what, God help us, could they save?
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Was it for this the wild geese spread
The grey wing upon every tide;
For this that all that blood was shed,
For this Edward Fitzgerald died,
And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone,
All that delirium of the brave?
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Yet could we turn the years again,
And call those exiles as they were
In all their loneliness and pain,
You'd cry, 'Some woman's yellow hair

Has maddened every mother's son':
They weighed so lightly what they gave.
But let them be, they're dead and gone,
They're with O'Leary in the grave.

Link: Not archived

October 14

Adlestrop

Edward Thomas

Yes. I remember Adlestrop—
The name, because one afternoon
Of heat the express-train drew up there
Unwontedly. It was late June.

The steam hissed. Someone cleared his throat.
No one left and no one came
On the bare platform. What I saw
Was Adlestrop—only the name

And willows, willow-herb, and grass,
And meadowsweet, and haycocks dry,
No whit less still and lonely fair
Than the high cloudlets in the sky.

And for that minute a blackbird sang
Close by, and round him, mistier,
Farther and farther, all the birds
Of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.

Link: Not archived

October 15

As imperceptibly as Grief

Emily Dickinson

As imperceptibly as Grief
The Summer lapsed away —
Too imperceptible, at last
To seem like Perfidy —

A Quietness distilled
As Twilight long begun
Or Nature spending with herself
Sequestered Afternoon —

The Dusk drew earlier in —
The Morning foreign shone —
A courteous, yet harrowing Grace
As Guest that would be gone —

And thus without a Wing
Or service of a Keel
Our Summer made her light escape
Into the Beautiful

Link: Not archived

October 16

A Glimpse

Walt Whitman

A glimpse through an interstice caught,
Of a crowd of workmen and drivers in a bar-room around the stove late of a winter night, and I unremark'd seated in a corner,
Of a youth who loves me and whom I love, silently approaching and seating himself near, that he may hold me by the hand,
A long while amid the noises of coming and going, of drinking and oath and smutty jest,
There we two, content, happy in being together, speaking little, perhaps not a word.

Link: Not archived

October 17

On Being Brought from Africa to America

Phillis Wheatley

'Twas mercy brought me from my Pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there's a God, that there's a Saviour too:
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew.
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,
"Their colour is a diabolic die."
Remember, Christians, Negros, black as Cain,
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.

Link: Not archived

October 18

After Death

Christina Rossetti

The curtains were half drawn, the floor was swept
And strewn with rushes, rosemary and may
Lay thick upon the bed on which I lay,
Where through the lattice ivy-shadows crept.
He leaned above me, thinking that I slept
And could not hear him; but I heard him say,
'Poor child, poor child': and as he turned away
Came a deep silence, and I knew he wept.
He did not touch the shroud, or raise the fold
That hid my face, or take my hand in his,
Or ruffle the smooth pillows for my head:
He did not love me living; but once dead
He pitied me; and very sweet it is
To know he still is warm though I am cold.

Link: Not archived

October 19

Figs from Thistles: First Fig

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!

Link: Not archived

October 20

This living hand, now warm and capable

John Keats

This living hand, now warm and capable
Of earnest grasping, would, if it were cold
And in the icy silence of the tomb,
So haunt thy days and chill thy dreaming nights
That thou would wish thine own heart dry of blood
So in my veins red life might stream again,
And thou be conscience-calm'd–see here it is–
I hold it towards you.

Link: Not archived

October 21

Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota

James Wright

Over my head, I see the bronze butterfly,
Asleep on the black trunk,
Blowing like a leaf in green shadow.
Down the ravine behind the empty house,
The cowbells follow one another
Into the distances of the afternoon.
To my right,
In a field of sunlight between two pines,
The droppings of last year's horses
Blaze up into golden stones.
I lean back, as the evening darkens and comes on.
A chicken hawk floats over, looking for home.
I have wasted my life.

Link: Not archived

October 22

Song to Amarantha, that she would Dishevel her Hair

Richard Lovelace

Amarantha sweet and fair
Ah braid no more that shining hair!
As my curious hand or eye
Hovering round thee let it fly.

Let it fly as unconfin'd
As its calm ravisher, the wind,
Who hath left his darling th'East,
To wanton o'er that spicy nest.

Ev'ry tress must be confest
But neatly tangled at the best;
Like a clue of golden thread,
Most excellently ravelled.

Do not then wind up that light
In ribands, and o'er-cloud in night;
Like the sun in's early ray,
But shake your head and scatter day.

See 'tis broke! Within this grove
The bower, and the walks of love,
Weary lie we down and rest,
And fan each other's panting breast.

Here we'll strip and cool our fire
In cream below, in milk-baths higher:
And when all wells are drawn dry,
I'll drink a tear out of thine eye,

Which our very joys shall leave

That sorrows thus we can deceive;
Or our very sorrows weep,
That joys so ripe, so little keep.

Link: Not archived

October 23

From Clee to heaven the beacon burns

A. E. Housman

From Clee to heaven the beacon burns,
The shires have seen it plain,
From north and south the sign returns
And beacons burn again.

Look left, look right, the hills are bright,
The dales are light between,
Because 'tis fifty years to-night
That God has saved the Queen.

Now, when the flame they watch not towers
About the soil they trod,
Lads, we'll remember friends of ours
Who shared the work with God.

To skies that knit their heartstrings right,
To fields that bred them brave,
The saviours come not home to-night:
Themselves they could not save.

It dawns in Asia, tombstones show
And Shropshire names are read;
And the Nile spills his overflow
Beside the Severn's dead.

We pledge in peace by farm and town
The Queen they served in war,
And fire the beacons up and down
The land they perished for.

"God save the Queen" we living sing,
From height to height 'tis heard;

And with the rest your voices ring,
    Lads of the Fifty-third.

Oh, God will save her, fear you not:
    Be you the men you've been,
Get you the sons your fathers got,
    And God will save the Queen.

Link: Not archived

October 24

Bahnhofstrasse

James Joyce

The eyes that mock me sign the way
Whereto I pass at eve of day.

Grey way whose violet signals are
The trysting and the twining star.

Ah star of evil! star of pain!
Highhearted youth comes not again

Nor old heart's wisdom yet to know
The signs that mock me as I go.

Link: Not archived

October 25

Love Calls Us to the Things of This World

Richard Wilbur

The eyes open to a cry of pulleys,
And spirited from sleep, the astounded soul
Hangs for a moment bodiless and simple
As false dawn.
    Outside the open window
The morning air is all awash with angels.

    Some are in bed-sheets, some are in blouses,
Some are in smocks: but truly there they are.
Now they are rising together in calm swells
Of halcyon feeling, filling whatever they wear
With the deep joy of their impersonal breathing;
    Now they are flying in place, conveying
The terrible speed of their omnipresence, moving
And staying like white water; and now of a sudden
They swoon down into so rapt a quiet
That nobody seems to be there.
    The soul shrinks

    From all that it is about to remember,
From the punctual rape of every blessèd day,
And cries,
    "Oh, let there be nothing on earth but laundry,
Nothing but rosy hands in the rising steam
And clear dances done in the sight of heaven."

    Yet, as the sun acknowledges
With a warm look the world's hunks and colors,
The soul descends once more in bitter love
To accept the waking body, saying now
In a changed voice as the man yawns and rises,

"Bring them down from their ruddy gallows;
Let there be clean linen for the backs of thieves;
Let lovers go fresh and sweet to be undone,
And the heaviest nuns walk in a pure floating
Of dark habits,
keeping their difficult balance."

Link: Not archived

October 26

Autumn

Walter Savage Landor

Mild is the parting year, and sweet
The odour of the falling spray;
Life passes on more rudely fleet,
And balmless is its closing day.

I wait its close, I court its gloom,
But mourn that never must there fall
Or on my breast or on my tomb
The tear that would have soothed it all.

Link: Not archived

October 27

The Definition of Love

Andrew Marvell

My love is of a birth as rare
As 'tis for object strange and high;
It was begotten by Despair
Upon Impossibility.

Magnanimous Despair alone
Could show me so divine a thing
Where feeble Hope could ne'er have flown,
But vainly flapp'd its tinsel wing.

And yet I quickly might arrive
Where my extended soul is fixt,
But Fate does iron wedges drive,
And always crowds itself betwixt.

For Fate with jealous eye does see
Two perfect loves, nor lets them close;
Their union would her ruin be,
And her tyrannic pow'r depose.

And therefore her decrees of steel
Us as the distant poles have plac'd,
(Though love's whole world on us doth wheel)
Not by themselves to be embrac'd;

Unless the giddy heaven fall,
And earth some new convulsion tear;
And, us to join, the world should all
Be cramp'd into a planisphere.

As lines, so loves oblique may well
Themselves in every angle greet;

But ours so truly parallel,
Though infinite, can never meet.

Therefore the love which us doth bind,
But Fate so enviously debars,
Is the conjunction of the mind,
And opposition of the stars.

Link: Not archived

October 28

The Swing

Robert Louis Stevenson

How do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
Ever a child can do!

Up in the air and over the wall,
Till I can see so wide,
Rivers and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside—

Till I look down on the garden green,
Down on the roof so brown—
Up in the air I go flying again,
Up in the air and down!

Link: Not archived

October 29

Token

Antony Dunn

When the boys came back with a disk of ice
prised from the mouth of a water-butt,
they'd taken turns with its slippery weight
across the hills and down towards the house:

a riot shield, a lighthouse lens, a wheel
from the Snow Queen's chariot, the shed skin
of the moon, a puddle closed for business,
the plug of a polar fishing-hole,

a sequin from a glacier's wedding train,
a rune, a superhero's hover-board,
a cymbal, a baffle, an almost-naught,
a store-house of one summer morning's rain,

a keyless portal to the underworld,
a coin to toss to choose between weathers,
a cataract, a long-playing record
of all the sound that water ever made.

In truth, we were afraid we could not think
what we should make of it, and turned away
and busied ourselves so as not to see
the hours and hours it took to come to nothing.

Link: Not archived

October 30

Sonnet 65: Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea

William Shakespeare

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea
But sad mortality o'er-sways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wrackful siege of batt'ring days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but time decays?
O fearful meditation! where, alack,
Shall time's best jewel from time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
    O, none, unless this miracle have might,
    That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

Link: Not archived

October 31

Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to dust

Sir Philip Sidney

Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to dust;
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things;
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust;
Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.
Draw in thy beams and humble all thy might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms be;
Which breaks the clouds and opens forth the light,
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.
O take fast hold; let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth draws out to death,
And think how evil becometh him to slide,
Who seeketh heav'n, and comes of heav'nly breath.
Then farewell, world; thy uttermost I see:
Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me.

Link: Not archived

November 1

Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird

Wallace Stevens

Among twenty snowy mountains,
The only moving thing
Was the eye of the blackbird.

I was of three minds,
Like a tree
In which there are three blackbirds.

The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds.
It was a small part of the pantomime.

A man and a woman
Are one.
A man and a woman and a blackbird
Are one.

I do not know which to prefer,
The beauty of inflections
Or the beauty of innuendoes,
The blackbird whistling
Or just after.

Icicles filled the long window
With barbaric glass.
The shadow of the blackbird
Crossed it, to and fro.
The mood
Traced in the shadow
An indecipherable cause.

O thin men of Haddam,
Why do you imagine golden birds?

Do you not see how the blackbird
Walks around the feet
Of the women about you?

I know noble accents
And lucid, inescapable rhythms;
But I know, too,
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know.

When the blackbird flew out of sight,
It marked the edge
Of one of many circles.

At the sight of blackbirds
Flying in a green light,
Even the bawds of euphony
Would cry out sharply.

He rode over Connecticut
In a glass coach.
Once, a fear pierced him,
In that he mistook
The shadow of his equipage
For blackbirds.

The river is moving.
The blackbird must be flying.

It was evening all afternoon.
It was snowing
And it was going to snow.
The blackbird sat
In the cedar-limbs.

Link: Not archived

November 2

✷

Sundown

Léonie Adams

This is the time lean woods shall spend
A steeped-up twilight, and the pale evening drink,
And the perilous roe, the leaper to the west brink,
Trembling and bright to the caverned cloud descend.

Now shall you see pent oak gone gusty and frantic,
Stooped with dry weeping, ruinously unloosing
The sparse disheveled leaf, or reared and tossing
A dreary scarecrow bough in funeral antic.

Then, tatter you and rend,
Oak heart, to your profession mourning; not obscure
The outcome, not crepuscular; on the deep floor
Sable and gold match lustres and contend.

And rags of shrouding will not muffle the slain.
This is the immortal extinction, the priceless wound
Not to be staunched. The live gold leaks beyond,
And matter's sanctified, dipped in a gold stain.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21202682

November 3

✷

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone

W. H. Auden

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message He Is Dead,
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last for ever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now: put out every one;
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood;
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21208074

November 4

The Solitary Reaper

William Wordsworth

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—

I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21211412

November 5

The Way Of The Wind

Algernon Charles Swinburne

The wind's way in the deep sky's hollow
None may measure, as none can say
How the heart in her shows the swallow
The wind's way.

Hope nor fear can avail to stay
Waves that whiten on wrecks that wallow,
Times and seasons that wane and slay.

Life and love, till the strong night swallow
Thought and hope and the red last ray,
Swim the waters of years that follow
The wind's way.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21216053

November 6

Ae Fond Kiss

Robert Burns

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, and then forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her;
Love but her, and love forever.
Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted—
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace. enjoyment, love, and pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

Link: Not archived

November 7

Sonnet 104: To me, fair friend, you never can be old

William Shakespeare

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turned
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah, yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred:
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21227832

November 8

Eternity

William Blake

He who binds to himself a joy
Does the winged life destroy
But he who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in Eternity‘s sun rise

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21231594

November 9

A blue anchor grains of grit in a tall sky sewing

John Ashbery

A blue anchor grains of grit in a tall sky sewing

I inch and only sometimes as far as the twisted pole gone
in spare colors

Too late the last express passes through the dust of
gardens

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21235382

November 10

To Emily Dickinson

Hart Crane

You who desired so much—in vain to ask—
Yet fed you hunger like an endless task,
Dared dignify the labor, bless the quest—
Achieved that stillness ultimately best,

Being, of all, least sought for: Emily, hear!
O sweet, dead Silencer, most suddenly clear
When singing that Eternity possessed
And plundered momently in every breast;

—Truly no flower yet withers in your hand.
The harvest you descried and understand
Needs more than wit to gather, love to bind.
Some reconcilement of remotest mind—

Leaves Ormus rubyless, and Ophir chill.
Else tears heap all within one clay-cold hill.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21237172

November 11

One Flesh

Elizabeth Jennings

Lying apart now, each in a separate bed,
He with a book, keeping the light on late,
She like a girl dreaming of childhood,
All men elsewhere - it is as if they wait
Some new event: the book he holds unread,
Her eyes fixed on the shadows overhead.

Tossed up like flotsam from a former passion,
How cool they lie. They hardly ever touch,
Or if they do it is like a confession
Of having little feeling - or too much.
Chastity faces them, a destination
For which their whole lives were a preparation.

Strangely apart, yet strangely close together,
Silence between them like a thread to hold
And not wind in. And time itself's a feather
Touching them gently. Do they know they're old,
These two who are my father and my mother
Whose fire from which I came, has now grown cold?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21244117

November 12

The Fair Singer

Andrew Marvell

To make a final conquest of all me,
Love did compose so sweet an enemy,
In whom both beauties to my death agree,
Joining themselves in fatal harmony;
That while she with her eyes my heart does bind,
She with her voice might captivate my mind.

I could have fled from one but singly fair,
My disentangled soul itself might save,
Breaking the curled trammels of her hair.
But how should I avoid to be her slave,
Whose subtle art invisibly can wreath
My fetters of the very air I breathe?

It had been easy fighting in some plain,
Where victory might hang in equal choice,
But all resistance against her is vain,
Who has th'advantage both of eyes and voice,
And all my forces needs must be undone,
She having gained both the wind and sun.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21248305

November 13

On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again

John Keats

O golden-tongued Romance with serene lute!
Fair plumed Syren! Queen of far away!
Leave melodizing on this wintry day,
Shut up thine olden pages, and be mute:
Adieu! for once again the fierce dispute,
Betwixt damnation and impassion'd clay
Must I burn through; once more humbly assay
The bitter-sweet of this Shakespearian fruit.
Chief Poet! and ye clouds of Albion,
Begetters of our deep eternal theme,
When through the old oak forest I am gone,
Let me not wander in a barren dream,
But when I am consumed in the fire,
Give me new Phoenix wings to fly at my desire.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21253491

November 14

Whatever Happened?

Philip Larkin

At once whatever happened starts receding.
Panting, and back on board, we line the rail
With trousers ripped, light wallets, and lips bleeding.

Yes, gone, thank God! Remembering each detail
We toss for half the night, but find next day
All's kodak—distant. Easily, then (though pale),

'Perspective brings significance,' we say,
Unhooding our photometers, and, snap!
What can't be printed can be thrown away.

Later, it's just a latitude: the map
Points out how unavoidable it was:
'Such coastal bedding always means mishap.'

Curses? The dark? Struggling? Where's the source
Of these yarns now (except in nightmares, of course)?

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21257886

November 15

Piano

D. H. Lawrence

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside
And hymns in the cosy parlour, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21259894

November 16

Song

Vernon Scannel

Slowly, now my lovely, slowly
Turn and linger while the light
Softens like a ripening fruit,
Lean towards me just as gently
As the day invites the night.

Do not speak a word my darling,
Let your movements be as mine,
Your proud limbs submit to time;
Yet do not hear the music's meaning,
Let our steps make perfect rhyme.

Softly now, my dear condemned one,
Close your eyes and not a word
Disturb perfection of this concord;
Easily my dear, my doomed one,
Move beneath the hanging sword.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21263865

November 17

Sea Love

Charlotte Mew

Tide be runnin' the great world over:
'Twas only last June month I mind that we
Was thinkin' the toss and the call in the breast of the lover
So everlastin' as the sea.

Heer's the same little fishes that sputter an swim,
Wi' the moon's old glim on the grey, wet sand;
An' him no more to me mor me to him
Than the wind goin' over my hand.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21267898

November 18

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat

Edward Lear

I
The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money,
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

II
Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?"
They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the Bong-Tree grows
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood
With a ring at the end of his nose,
His nose,
His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

III
"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."
So they took it away, and were married next day

By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21272140

November 19

Fog

Carl Sandburg

The fog comes
on little cat feet.

It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21277226

November 20

Lines: The cold earth slept below

Percy Bysshe Shelley

The cold earth slept below;
Above the cold sky shone;
And all around,
With a chilling sound,
From caves of ice and fields of snow
The breath of night like death did flow
Beneath the sinking moon.

The wintry hedge was black;
The green grass was not seen;
The birds did rest
On the bare thorn's breast,
Whose roots, beside the pathway track,
Had bound their folds o'er many a crack
Which the frost had made between.

Thine eyes glow'd in the glare
Of the moon's dying light;
As a fen-fire's beam
On a sluggish stream
Gleams dimly—so the moon shone there,
And it yellow'd the strings of thy tangled hair,
That shook in the wind of night.

The moon made thy lips pale, beloved;
The wind made thy bosom chill;
The night did shed
On thy dear head
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie
Where the bitter breath of the naked sky
Might visit thee at will.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21281379

November 21

Sonnet 97: How like a winter hath my absence been

William Shakespeare

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness everywhere!
And yet this time remov'd was summer's time,
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21284267

November 22

Dead Love

Algernon Charles Swinburne

Dead love, by treason slain, lies stark,
White as a dead stark-stricken dove:
None that pass by him pause to mark
    Dead love.

His heart, that strained and yearned and strove
As toward the sundawn strives the lark,
Is cold as all the old joy thereof.

Dead men, re-arisen from dust, may hark
When rings the trumpet blown above:
It will not raise from out the dark
    Dead love.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21287967

November 23

In Time of Plague

Thomas Nashe

Adieu, farewell, earth's bliss;
This world uncertain is;
Fond are life's lustful joys;
Death proves them all but toys;
None from his darts can fly;
I am sick, I must die.
        Lord, have mercy on us!

Rich men, trust not in wealth,
Gold cannot buy you health;
Physic himself must fade.
All things to end are made,
The plague full swift goes by;
I am sick, I must die.
        Lord, have mercy on us!

Beauty is but a flower
Which wrinkles will devour;
Brightness falls from the air;
Queens have died young and fair;
Dust hath closed Helen's eye.
I am sick, I must die.
        Lord, have mercy on us!

Strength stoops unto the grave,
Worms feed on Hector's brave;
Swords may not fight with fate,
Earth still holds ope her gate.
"Come, come!" the bells do cry.
I am sick, I must die.
        Lord, have mercy on us.

Wit with his wantonness
Tasteth death's bitterness;
Hell's executioner
Hath no ears for to hear
What vain art can reply.
I am sick, I must die.
        Lord, have mercy on us.

Haste, therefore, each degree,
To welcome destiny;
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage;
Mount we unto the sky.
I am sick, I must die.
        Lord, have mercy on us.

Link: Not archived

November 24

I've Been Roaming

George Darley

I've been roaming! I've been roaming
Where the meadow dew is sweet,
And like a queen I'm coming
With its pearls upon my feet.

I've been roaming! I've been roaming!
O'er red rose and lily fair,
And like a sylph I'm coming
With their blossoms in my hair.

I've been roaming! I've been roaming!
Where the honeysuckle creeps,
And like a bee I'm coming
With its kisses on my lips.

I've been roaming! I've been roaming!
Over hill and over plain,
And like a bird I'm coming
To my bower back again!

Link: Not archived

November 25

Her Anxiety

William Butler Yeats

Earth in beauty dressed
Awaits returning spring.
All true love must die,
Alter at the best
Into some lesser thing
Prove that I lie.

Such body lovers have,
Such exacting breath,
Theat they touch or sigh.
Every touch they give,
Love is nearer death.
Prove that I lie.

(1865 - 1939)

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21302136

November 26

Woman's Constancy

John Donne

Now thou has loved me one whole day,
Tomorrow when you leav'st, what wilt thou say?
Wilt thou then antedate some new-made vow?
    Or say that now
We are not just those persons which we were?
Or, that oaths made in reverential fear
Of Love, and his wrath, any may forswear?
Or, as true deaths true marriages untie,
So lovers' contracts, images of those,
Bind but till sleep, death's image, them unloose?
    Or, your own end to justify,
For having purposed change and falsehood, you
Can have no way but falsehood to be true?
Vain lunatic, against these 'scapes I could
    Dispute and conquer, if I would,
    Which I abstain to do,
For by tomorrow, I may think so too.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21304565

November 27

Oread

H. D.

Whirl up, sea—
whirl your pointed pines,
splash your great pines
on our rocks,
hurl your green over us,
cover us with your pools of fir.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21309710

November 28

✷

My Last Duchess

Robert Browning

FERRARA

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now; Fra Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek; perhaps
Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat." Such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?— too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool

Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—which I have not—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse—
E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretense
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21313328

November 29

The Hawk in the Rain

Ted Hughes

I drown in the drumming ploughland, I drag up
Heel after heel from the swallowing of the earth's mouth,
From clay that clutches my each step to the ankle
With the habit of the dogged grave, but the hawk

Effortlessly at height hangs his still eye.
His wings hold all creation in a weightless quiet,
Steady as a hallucination in the streaming air.
While banging wind kills these stubborn hedges,

Thumbs my eyes, throws my breath, tackles my heart,
And rain hacks my head to the bone, the hawk hangs
The diamond point of will that polestars
The sea drowner's endurance: and I,
Bloodily grabbed dazed last-moment-counting
Morsel in the earth's mouth, strain towards the master-
Fulcrum of violence where the hawk hangs still,
That maybe in his own time meets the weather

Coming from the wrong way, suffers the air, hurled upside down,
Fall from his eye, the ponderous shires crash on him,
The horizon traps him; the round angelic eye
Smashed, mix his heart's blood with the mire of the land.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21318913

November 30

The Snow Man

Wallace Stevens

One must have a mind of winter
To regard the frost and the boughs
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;

And have been cold a long time
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,
The spruces rough in the distant glitter

Of the January sun; and not to think
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land
Full of the same wind
That is blowing in the same bare place

For the listener, who listens in the snow,
And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21325020

December 1

Remember Thee! Remember Thee!

Lord Byron

Remember thee! remember thee!
Till Lethe quench life's burning stream
Remorse and shame shall cling to thee,
And haunt thee like a feverish dream!

Remember thee! Aye, doubt it not.
Thy husband too shall think of thee:
By neither shalt thou be forgot,
Thou false to him, thou fiend to me!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21328557

December 2

✷

In Romney Marsh

John Davidson

As I went down to Dymchurch Wall,
I heard the South sing o'er the land
I saw the yellow sunlight fall
On knolls where Norman churches stand.

And ringing shrilly, taut and lithe,
Within the wind a core of sound,
The wire from Romney town to Hythe
Along its airy journey wound.

A veil of purple vapour flowed
And trailed its fringe along the Straits;
The upper air like sapphire glowed:
And roses filled Heaven's central gates.

Masts in the offing wagged their tops;
The swinging waves pealed on the shore;
The saffron beach, all diamond drops
And beads of surge, prolonged the roar.

As I came up from Dymchurch Wall,
I saw above the Downs' low crest
The crimson brands of sunset fall,
Flicker and fade from out the West.

Night sank: like flakes of silver fire
The stars in one great shower came down;
Shrill blew the wind; and shrill the wire
Rang out from Hythe to Romney town.

The darkly shining salt sea drops

Streamed as the waves clashed on the shore;
The beach, with all its organ stops
Pealing again, prolonged the roar.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21332204

December 3

The Waking

Theodore Roethke

I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.
I feel my fate in what I cannot fear.
I learn by going where I have to go.

We think by feeling. What is there to know?
I hear my being dance from ear to ear.
I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.

Of those so close beside me, which are you?
God bless the Ground! I shall walk softly there,
And learn by going where I have to go.

Light takes the Tree; but who can tell us how?
The lowly worm climbs up a winding stair;
I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.

Great Nature has another thing to do
To you and me; so take the lively air,
And, lovely, learn by going where to go.

This shaking keeps me steady. I should know.
What falls away is always. And is near.
I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.
I learn by going where I have to go.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21336508

December 4

✷

Time does not bring relief; you all have lied

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Time does not bring relief; you all have lied
Who told me time would ease me of my pain!
I miss him in the weeping of the rain;
I want him at the shrinking of the tide;
The old snows melt from every mountain-side,
And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane;
But last year's bitter loving must remain
Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide.
There are a hundred places where I fear
To go,—so with his memory they brim.
And entering with relief some quiet place
Where never fell his foot or shone his face
I say, "There is no memory of him here!"
And so stand stricken, so remembering him.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21341440

December 5

The Darkling Thrush

Thomas Hardy

I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-grey,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,

That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21344997

December 6

"Hope" is the thing with feathers

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 chillest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21350616

December 7

'Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend'

Gerard Manley Hopkins

> Justus quidem tu es, Domine, si disputem tecum; verumtamen
> justa loquar ad te: Quare via impiorum prosperatur? &c.

Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend
With thee; but, sir, so what I plead is just.
Why do sinners' ways prosper? and why must
Disappointment all I endeavour end?
Wert thou my enemy, O thou my friend,
How wouldst thou worse, I wonder, than thou dost
Defeat, thwart me? Oh, the sots and thralls of lust
Do in spare hours more thrive than I that spend,
Sir, life upon thy cause. See, banks and brakes
Now, leavèd how thick! lacèd they are again
With fretty chervil, look, and fresh wind shakes
Them; birds build – but not I build; no, but strain,
Time's eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes.
Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21355068

December 8

Meeting at Night

Robert Browning

I
The grey sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

II
Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21359224

December 9

The Presence Of Love

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

And in Life's noisiest hour,
There whispers still the ceaseless Love of Thee,
The heart's Self-solace and soliloquy.

> You mould my Hopes, you fashion me within ;
> And to the leading Love-throb in the Heart
> Thro' all my Being, thro' my pulses beat ;
> You lie in all my many Thoughts, like Light,
> Like the fair light of Dawn, or summer Eve
> On rippling Stream, or cloud-reflecting Lake.

And looking to the Heaven, that bends above you,
How oft ! I bless the Lot, that made me love you.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21363179

December 10

Voyages III

Hart Crane

Infinite consanguinity it bears
This tendered theme of you that light
Retrieves from sea plains where the sky
Resigns a breast that every wave enthrones;
While ribboned water lanes I wind
Are laved and scattered with no stroke
Wide from your side, whereto this hour
The sea lifts, also, reliquary hands.

And so, admitted through black swollen gates
That must arrest all distance otherwise,
Past whirling pillars and lithe pediments,
Light wrestling there incessantly with light,
Star kissing star through wave on wave unto
Your body rocking!
and where death, if shed,
Presumes no carnage, but this single change,-
Upon the steep floor flung from dawn to dawn
The silken skilled transmemberment of song;

Permit me voyage, love, into your hands . .

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21367451

December 11

✷

Ode on a Grecian Urn

John Keats

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young;

All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21371663

December 12

The Stolen Child

William Butler Yeats

Where dips the rocky highland
Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water rats;
There we've hid our faery vats,
Full of berrys
And of reddest stolen cherries.
Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
The dim gray sands with light,
Far off by furthest Rosses
We foot it all the night,
Weaving olden dances
Mingling hands and mingling glances
Till the moon has taken flight;
To and fro we leap
And chase the frothy bubbles,
While the world is full of troubles
And anxious in its sleep.
Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Where the wandering water gushes
From the hills above Glen-Car,
In pools among the rushes
That scarce could bathe a star,
We seek for slumbering trout
And whispering in their ears
Give them unquiet dreams;
Leaning softly out
From ferns that drop their tears
Over the young streams.
Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Away with us he's going,
The solemn-eyed:
He'll hear no more the lowing
Of the calves on the warm hillside
Or the kettle on the hob
Sing peace into his breast,
Or see the brown mice bob
Round and round the oatmeal chest.
For he comes, the human child,
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than he can understand.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21375697

December 13

Here dead we lie because we did not choose

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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21380642

December 14

Dreams

John Dryden

Dreams are but interludes which Fancy makes;
When monarch Reason sleeps, this mimic wakes:
Compounds a medley of disjointed things,
A mob of cobblers, and a court of kings:
Light fumes are merry, grosser fumes are sad;
Both are the reasonable soul run mad;
And many monstrous forms in sleep we see,
That neither were, nor are, nor e'er can be.
Sometimes forgotten things long cast behind
Rush forward in the brain, and come to mind.
The nurse's legends are for truths received,
And the man dreams but what the boy believed.
Sometimes we but rehearse a former play,
The night restores our actions done by day;
As hounds in sleep will open for their prey.
In short, the farce of dreams is of a piece,
Chimeras all; and more absurd, or less.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21383983

December 15

Follow Thy Fair Sun

Thomas Campion

Follow thy fair sun, unhappy shadow,
Though thou be black as night
And she made all of light,
Yet follow thy fair sun unhappy shadow.

Follow her whose light thy light depriveth,
Though here thou liv'st disgraced,
And she in heaven is placed,
Yet follow her whose light the world reviveth.

Follow those pure beams whose beauty burneth,
That so have scorched thee,
As thou still black must be,
Till Her kind beams thy black to brightness turneth.

Follow her while yet her glory shineth,
There comes a luckless night,
That will dim all her light,
And this the black unhappy shade divineth.

Follow still since so thy fates ordained,
The Sun must have his shade,
Till both at once do fade,
The Sun still proved, the shadow still disdained.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21388865

December 16

The Rain-bow

Thomas Love Peacock

The day has pass'd in storms, though not unmix'd
With transitory calm. The western clouds,
Dissolving slow, unveil the glorious sun,
Majestic in decline. The wat'ry east
Glows with the many-tinted arch of Heav'n.
We hail it as a pledge that brighter skies
Shall bless the coming morn. Thus rolls the day,
The short dark day of life; with tempests thus,
And fleeting sun-shine chequer'd. At its close,
When the dread hour draws near, that bursts all ties,
All commerce with the world, Religion pours
Hope's fairy-colors on the virtuous mind,
And, like the rain-bow on the ev'ning clouds,
Gives the bright promise that a happier dawn
Shall chase the night and silence of the grave.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21393735

December 17

Mild is the Parting Year

Walter Savage Landor

Mild is the parting year, and sweet
The odour of the falling spray;
Life passes on more rudely fleet,
And balmless is its closing day.

I wait its close, I court its gloom,
But mourn that never must there fall
Or on my breast or on my tomb
The tear that would have soothed it all.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21397825

December 18

Bright Star of Beauty

Michael Drayton

Bright star of beauty, on whose eyelids sit
A thousand nymph-like and enamour'd Graces,
The Goddesses of Memory and Wit,
Which there in order take their several places;
In whose dear bosom sweet delicious Love
Lays down his quiver, which he once did bear,
Since he that blessed Paradise did prove,
And leaves his mother's lap to sport him there.
Let others strive to entertain with words;
My soul is of a braver metal made;
I hold that vile which vulgar wit affords;
In me's that faith which Time cannot invade.
Let what I praise be still made good by you;
Be you most worthy, whilst I am most true.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21401212

December 19

In drear nighted December

John Keats

In drear nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity—
The north cannot undo them
With a sleety whistle through them
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

In drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;
But with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy—
But were there ever any
Writh'd not of passed joy?
The feel of not to feel it,
When there is none to heal it
Nor numbed sense to steel it,
Was never said in rhyme.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21406333

December 20

Tears, Idle Tears

Lord Tennyson

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more!

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21411240

December 21

Murdering Beauty

Thomas Carew

I'll gaze no more on her bewitching face,
Since ruin harbours there in every place ;
For my enchanted soul alike she drowns
With calms and tempests of her smiles and frowns.
I'll love no more those cruel eyes of hers,
Which, pleased or anger'd, still are murderers :
For if she dart, like lightning, through the air
Her beams of wrath, she kills me with despair :
If she behold me with a pleasing eye,
I surfeit with excess of joy, and die.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21415697

December 22

I have a Bird in spring

Emily Dickinson

I have a Bird in spring
Which for myself doth sing –
The spring decoys.
And as the summer nears –
And as the Rose appears,
Robin is gone.

Yet do I not repine
Knowing that Bird of mine
Though flown –
Learneth beyond the sea
Melody new for me
And will return.

Fast in safer hand
Held in a truer Land
Are mine –
And though they now depart,
Tell I my doubting heart
They're thine.

In a serener Bright,
In a more golden light
I see
Each little doubt and fear,
Each little discord here
Removed.

Then will I not repine,
Knowing that Bird of mine
Though flown

Shall in distant tree
Bright melody for me
Return.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21420661

December 23

Strange Things Happen at Night

John Ashbery

Without thinking too much about it,
prepare to go out into the city of your dreams.
Now, look up. At first they cannot see you.
Later, the adjustment will be made.
Your boyfriend sips bark tea.

The number should've turned up by now.
Perhaps the driving rain impedes it,
the recession. In any case there are two too many of
    us here .
We must double up, or die.

And that might be a practical if remote solution.
It's not every day you get to bicycle past the ribbons
of people, watch the grand hotels
for some event thought imminent—not lost.

If ever I was going to turn up your volume—
but this isn't about living, is it?
Or is it? I mean, many suppers in the seven modes
or grades, as many as can be made to last
once the bosses and their beagles have passed through.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21422351

December 24

The Lamb

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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21427185

December 25

✷

Christ's Nativity

Henry Vaughan

Awake, glad heart! get up and sing!
It is the birth-day of thy King.
Awake! awake!
The Sun doth shake
Light from his locks, and all the way
Breathing perfumes, doth spice the day.

Awake, awake! hark how th' wood rings;
Winds whisper, and the busy springs
A concert make;
Awake! awake!
Man is their high-priest, and should rise
To offer up the sacrifice.

I would I were some bird, or star,
Flutt'ring in woods, or lifted far
Above this inn
And road of sin!
Then either star or bird should be
Shining or singing still to thee.

I would I had in my best part
Fit rooms for thee! or that my heart
Were so clean as
Thy manger was!
But I am all filth, and obscene;
Yet, if thou wilt, thou canst make clean.

Sweet Jesu! will then. Let no more
This leper haunt and soil thy door!

Cure him, ease him,
O release him!
And let once more, by mystic birth,
The Lord of life be born in earth.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21431782

December 26

Fan-Piece for Her Imperial Lord

Ezra Pound

O fan of white silk,
    clear as frost on the grass-blade,
You also are laid aside.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21435405

December 27

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Possible Answers to Prayer

Scott Cairns

Your petitions—though they continue to bear
just the one signature—have been duly recorded.
Your anxieties—despite their constant,

relatively narrow scope and inadvertent
entertainment value—nonetheless serve
to bring your person vividly to mind.

Your repentance—all but obscured beneath
a burgeoning, yellow fog of frankly more
conspicuous resentment—is sufficient.

Your intermittent concern for the sick,
the suffering, the needy poor is sometimes
recognizable to me, if not to them.

Your angers, your zeal, your lipsmackingly
righteous indignation toward the many
whose habits and sympathies offend you—

these must burn away before you'll apprehend
how near I am, with what fervor I adore
precisely these, the several who rouse your passions.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21439234

December 28

If Thou Must Love Me

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
"I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day" -
For these things in themselves, Beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry, -
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21444171

December 29

Year's End

Richard Wilbur

Now winter downs the dying of the year,
And night is all a settlement of snow;
From the soft street the rooms of houses show
A gathered light, a shapen atmosphere,
Like frozen-over lakes whose ice is thin
And still allows some stirring down within.

I've known the wind by water banks to shake
The late leaves down, which frozen where they fell
And held in ice as dancers in a spell
Fluttered all winter long into a lake;
Graved on the dark in gestures of descent,
They seemed their own most perfect monument.

There was perfection in the death of ferns
Which laid their fragile cheeks against the stone
A million years. Great mammoths overthrown
Composedly have made their long sojourns,
Like palaces of patience, in the gray
And changeless lands of ice. And at Pompeii

The little dog lay curled and did not rise
But slept the deeper as the ashes rose
And found the people incomplete, and froze
The random hands, the loose unready eyes
Of men expecting yet another sun
To do the shapely thing they had not done.

These sudden ends of time must give us pause.
We fray into the future, rarely wrought
Save in the tapestries of afterthought.

More time, more time. Barrages of applause
Come muffled from a buried radio.
The New-year bells are wrangling with the snow.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21448650

December 30

Voices Of The Night : A Psalm Of Life

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,

And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21454033

December 31

Sonnet 130: My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun

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 damasked, 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.

Link: https://warosu.org/lit/thread/S21459144