

**"EARLY IN THE MORNING"**

Text by Walt Whitman

Early in the morning  
 Of a lovely summer day  
 As they lowered the bright awning  
 At the outdoor café  
 I was breakfasting on croissants  
 And café au lait  
 Under greenery like scenery  
 Rue François Premier  
 They were hosing the hot pavement  
 With a dash of flashing spray  
 And a smell of summer showers  
 When the dust is drenched away  
 Under greenery like scenery  
 Rue François Premier  
 I was twenty and a lover  
 And in Paradise to stay  
 Very early in the morning  
 Of a lovely summer day

**"I AM ROSE"**

Text by Gertrude Stein

I am Rose my eyes are blue.  
 I am Rose who are you?  
 I am Rose and when I sing  
 I am Rose like anything.

**"THE SERPENT"**

Text by Theodore Roethke

There was a Serpent who had to Sing,  
 There was. There was.  
 He simply gave up Serpentine  
 Because. Because.  
 He didn't like his Kind of Life;  
 He couldn't find a Proper Wife;  
 He got no pleasure Down his Hole;  
 He was a Serpent with a Soul;  
 And so, of course, he had to Sing;  
 And Sing he did, like Anything!

The Birds they were, they were Astounded;  
 And Various measures they propounded  
 To stop the Serpent's Awful Racket:  
 They bought a Drum, he wouldn't Whack it;  
 They sent, —you always send, —to Cuba  
 And got a Most Commodious Tuba;  
 They got a Horn, they got a Flute,  
 But Nothin did that Serpent suit.  
 He said, "Look, Birds, all this is futile;  
 I do not like to Bang or Tootle."  
 And then he cut loose with a Horrible Note  
 That practically split the Top of his Throat!  
 "You see," he said, with a Serpent's Leer,  
 "I'm Serious about my Singing Career!"

**"TAKE ME BACK UP THE HILL"** from *Our Town*

Text by J. D. McClatchy

Take me back.  
 Take me back up the hill.  
 Take me back to my grave.  
 Wait! One more look.  
 Good-bye.  
 Good-bye, world.  
 Good-bye, Grover's Corners.  
 Mama, Papa, good-bye.  
 Good-bye ticking clocks,  
 to mama's hollyhocks,  
 to coffee and food,  
 to gratitude.  
 Good-bye, good-bye, world.  
 Good-bye to ironed dresses,  
 To Georges's sweet caresses,  
 To my wedding ring, oh! everything.  
 Good-bye.  
 Good-bye, world.

Does anybody ever realize life while they live it,  
 Every minute of it,  
 Every moment of it?  
 Oh, earth, you are too magical for anyone to  
 know your miracle!

Oh, take me back.  
 Take me back up the hill.  
 Take me back up the hill.

**"ON AN ECHOING ROAD"**from *Evidence of Things Not Seen*

Text excerpted from an anonymous French poem

On an echoing road, trotting in unison,  
 now out of step, now as one again,  
 are two horses saddled together,  
 guided by a single hand.  
 The needle and the pen, the habit of work  
 and the sly urge to quit the habit, make  
 friends with each other,  
 then separate, then reconcile again....  
 O my slow steeds, pull now together;  
 from here I can see the end of the road.

**SANTA FE SONGS**

Text by Witter Bynner

**"SANTA FE"**

Among the automobiles and in a region  
 Now Democrat, now Republican,  
 With a department store, a branch of the Legion,  
 A Chamber of Commerce and a moving-van,  
 In spite of cities crowding on the Trail,  
 Here is a mountain-town that prays and dances  
 With something left, though much besides  
 must fail,  
 Of the ancient faith and wisdom of St. Francis.

His annual feast has come. His image moves  
 Along these streets of people. And the trees  
 And kneeling women, just as they did before,  
 Welcome and worship him because he proves  
 That natural sinners put him at his ease,  
 And so he enters the cathedral door.

**"OPUS 101"**

He not only plays  
 One note  
 But holds another note  
 Away from it—  
 As a lover  
 Lifts  
 A waft of hair  
 From loved eyes.  
 The piano shivers,  
 When he touches it,  
 And the leg shines.

**"ANY OTHER TIME"**

Any other time would have done  
 But not now  
 Because now there is no time  
 And when there is no time  
 It only stands still on its own center  
 Waiting to be wound

Once upon a time somebody will unwind it  
 And then what a time  
 In no time at all.

**"SONNET"**

Summer, O Summer, fill thy shadowy trees  
 With a reprieve of cooling sacrament  
 Before we die among the mysteries;  
 Loosen our wreaths and let us be content  
 To bow our heads before thy flower-bells  
 Beneath whose mould we too shall soon be spent,—  
 Lovers desiring this and little else:  
 Thy laurel now; not ours, thy firmament  
 Of blue in which to dedicate our blood  
 To earth, our vernal meaning now but meant,  
 Like the least meaning of thy smallest bud,  
 To go the way the earlier seasons went,  
 Breath is our fee and dividend and cost:  
 So let us grant the forfeit and be lost!

**"COMING DOWN THE STAIRS"**

Coming down the stairs  
 She paused midway  
 And turned  
 And assembled the railing  
 Which thereupon went upstairs  
 Leaving her slowly alone

### "HE NEVER KNEW"

He never knew what was the matter with him  
Until one night  
He chopped up his bed for firewood  
It was comfortable that way  
And then another night a year later  
It came roaring up the street at him  
As a sunset.

### "EL MUSICO"

Looking beyond us always  
He played the harp  
And sang the song with it  
A little sharp  
Or took from one of the others  
A violin  
And sang the song with it  
A little thin,  
Or else he stroked the sand  
Where he sat  
And sang the song with it  
A little flat;  
But whatever the song he sang,  
He seemed to know  
Exactly in his voice  
How the winds blow,  
And how the waves come up  
Chapala shore,  
And how the birds sing a little  
And then more,  
And why the birds are careless  
Of a church-bell.  
Others sang better than he,  
But none so well.

### "THE WINTRY-MIND"

Winter uncovers distances, I find;  
And so the cold and so the wintry mind  
Takes leaves away, till there is left behind  
A wide cold world. And so the heart grows blind  
To the earth's green motions lying warm below  
Field upon field, field upon field, of snow.

### "WATER-HYACINTHS"

I  
What is so permanent as a first love,  
Except the impermanence of later loves?  
... I sit in a rowboat, watching hyacinths  
Float down the lake and thinking about people,  
How they insinuate and change and vanish,  
How everyone leaves everyone alone,  
How even the look of a beloved child  
Is lesser solace than a mountain-rim.

### II

Have I a grievance then against my friends,  
Against my lovers? Is love so unavailing,  
That here in a rowboat I shrug my naked shoulder  
And watch the hyacinths go down the lake?  
Do words that were light as air on living lips  
Last longer when they crumble underground?  
And is the soul an insecurity thing,  
Less intimate, than the connecting earth?

### "MOVING LEAVES"

How could I know the wisdom of a world  
That blows its withered leaves down from the air  
They gleamed in once and gathers their strength again upward  
In the sap of earth if I set my fervid heart  
On a leaf unmoved by any wind of change,  
If I wanted still that spring when first I loved?  
No leaves that have ever fallen anywhere  
Are anywhere but here, heaping the trees.

### "YES I HEAR THEM"

Yes I hear them  
Steps on the staircase outside my door  
With no one attached

I have stopped looking  
But always when I snap off the last bulb  
The footsteps come and wander

And always  
When the dawn-light follows  
They wander away  
Footsteps with no one attached

I have stopped looking  
So that last week  
They changed  
They came with the daylight and are here now

But we have no railings.

### "THE SOWERS"

Now horses' hooves are treading earth again  
To start the wheat from darkness into day,  
And along the heavy field go seven men  
With hands on ploughs and eyes on furrowing clay.

Six of the men are old; but one, a boy,  
Knows in his heart that more than fields are sown—  
For spring is ploughing heaven with rows of joy  
In the voice of one high bird, singing alone.