



Poetry creates a space in which language
transcends meaning.

It invites us to slow down, feel and see
the world with new eyes.

In our fast-paced world, poetry provides an
opportunity to embrace nuance, imagination
and connection.

It captures what is difficult to express
and makes it shareable.

Poetry enriches our thoughts, sharpens our
senses, and reminds us that beauty often
lies in small details, the unexpected, and
carefully chosen words.

Passing of the Old Year

Mary Weston Fordham (1843-1905)

Ah! the year is slowly dying,
And the wind in tree-top sighing,
Chant his requiem.
Thick and fast the leaves are falling,
High in air wild birds are calling,
Nature's solemn hymn.

In the deep, dark forest lingers,
Imprints of his icy fingers,
Chill, and dark, and cold.
And the little streamlets flowing,
Wintry sun so softly glowing,
Through the maple's gold.

So, Old Year, gird on your armor,
Let not age, nor fear, nor favor,
Hurry you along.
List! the farewell echoes pealing,
List! the midnight hour is stealing,
Hark! thy dying song.

Say, Old Year, ere yet your death knell
Rings from out yon distant church bell,
Say, what have you done?
Tell of hearts you've sadly broken,
Tell of love dead and unspoken,
Ere your course is run.

Tell the mother who doth languish,
O'er her graves in silent anguish,
She will see again,
Blooming bright "beyond the river,"
Living on for aye an ever,
Every bright-eyed gem.

Ah! full many a spirit weary,
You have wooed from paths so dreary,
Wafted them above.
Now they say Old Year, we bless thee
Raise thy head, we would caress thee
For this home of love.

On thy brow lies many a furrow,
And thy eyes tell many a sorrow
Hath its shadow cast.
But thy task is almost ended,
Soon the path which thou hast wended,
Will be called the "Past."

Then, old dying year we hold thee,
To our hearts we fondly fold thee,
Ere the midnight bell.
Soon thy race will now be ended,
With Eternity be blended,
So, Old Year, farewell.

New Year's Eve

D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930)

There are only two things now,
The great black night scooped out
And this fire-glow.

This fire-glow, the core,
And we the two ripe pips
That are held in store.

Listen, the darkness rings
As it circulates round our fire.
Take off your things.

Your shoulders, your bruised throat!
Your breasts, your nakedness!
This fiery coat!

As the darkness flickers and dips,
As the fireflight falls and leaps
From your feet to your lips!

Experience

Carl Sandburg (1878 - 1967)

This morning I looked at the map of the day
And said to myself, "This is the way! This is the way I will go;
Thus shall I range on the roads of achievement,
The way is so clear—it shall all be a joy on the lines marked out."
And then as I went came a place that was strange,—
'Twas a place not down on the map!
And I stumbled and fell and lay in the weeds,
And looked on the day with rue.

I am learning a little—never to be sure—
To be positive only with what is past,
And to peer sometimes at the things to come
As a wanderer treading the night
When the mazy stars neither point nor beckon,
And of all the roads, no road is sure.

I see those men with maps and talk
Who tell how to go and where and why;
I hear with my ears the words of their mouths,
As they finger with ease the marks on the maps;
And only as one looks robust, lonely, and querulous,
As if he had gone to a country far
And made for himself a map,
Do I cry to him, "I would see your map!
I would heed that map you have!"

Lösch mir die Augen aus

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

Lösch mir die Augen aus: ich kann dich sehn,
wirf mir die Ohren zu: ich kann dich hören,
und ohne Füße kann ich zu dir gehn,
und ohne Mund noch kann ich dich beschwören.

Brich mir die Arme ab, ich fasse dich
mit meinem Herzen wie mit einer Hand,
halt mir das Herz zu, und mein Hirn wird schlagen,
und wirfst du in mein Hirn den Brand,
so werd ich dich auf meinem Blute tragen.

A Confession to a Friend in Trouble

Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928)

Your troubles shrink not, though I feel them less
Here, far away, than when I tarried near;
I even smile old smiles—with listlessness—
Yet smiles they are, not ghastly mockeries mere.

A thought too strange to house within my brain
Haunting its outer precincts I discern:
—That I will not show zeal again to learn
Your griefs, and, sharing them, renew my pain. . . .

It goes, like murky bird or buccaneer
That shapes its lawless figure on the main,
And each new impulse tends to make outlee
The unseemingly instinct that had lodgment here;
Yet, comrade old, can bitterer knowledge be
Than that, though banned, such instinct was in me!

Sphinx

Else Lasker-Schüler (1869-1945)

Sie sitzt an meinem Bette in der Abendzeit
Und meine Seele tut nach ihrem Willen,
Und in dem Dämmerne, traumesstillen,
Engen wie Fäden dünn sich ihre Glanzpupillen
Um ihrer Sinne schläfrige Geschmeidigkeit.

Und auf dem Nebenbette an den Leinennähten
Knistern die Spitzenranken von Narzissen,
Und ihre Hände dehnen breit sich nach dem Kissen
Auf dem noch Träume blühn aus seinen Küssen,
Wie süßer Duft auf weißen Beeten.

Und lächelnd taucht die Mondfrau in die Wolkenwellen
Und meine bleichen, leidenden Psychen
Erstarken neu im Kampf mit Widersprüchen.

Near the End of April

William Stanley Braithwaite (1878-1962)

Near the end of April
On the verge of May—
And o my heart, the woods were dusk
At the close of day.

Half a word was spoken
Out of half a dream,
And God looked in my soul and saw
A dawn rise and gleam.

Near the end of April
Twenty Mays have met,
And half a word and half a dream
Remember and forget.

Our share of night to bear

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Our share of night to bear -
Our share of morning -
Our blank in bliss to fill,
Our blank in scorning -

Here a star, and there a star,
Some lose their way!
Here a mist - and there a mist -
Afterwards - Day!

Winter to Spring

Irvin W. Underhill (1868-1948)

Did not I remember that my hair is grey
With only a fringe of it left,
I'd follow your footsteps from wee break of day
Till night was of moon-light bereft.

Your eyes wondrous fountains of joy and of youth
Remind me of days long since flown,
My sweetheart, I led to the altar of truth,
But then the gay spring was my own.

Now winter has come with its snow and its wind
And made me as bare as its trees,
Oh, yes, I still love, but it's only in mind,
For I'm fast growing weak at the knees.

Your voice is as sweet as the song of a bird,
Your manners are those of the fawn,
I dream of you, darling, —oh, pardon, that word,
From twilight to breaking of dawn.

Your name in this missive you'll search for in vain,
Nor mine at the finis, I'll fling,
For winter must suffer the bliss and the pain
In secret for loving the spring.

Freedom and Truth

Margaret Fuller (1810-1850)

The shrine is vowed to freedom, but, my friend,
Freedom is but a means to gain an end.
Freedom should build the temple, but the shrine
Be consecrate to thought still more divine.
The human bliss which angel hopes foresaw
Is liberty to comprehend the law.
Give, then, thy book a larger scope and frame,
Comprising means and end in Truth's great name.

A Wish

Joshua Henry Jones, Jr. (?-1955)

When your joys are of the sweetest
And your heart is light and free;
When your griefs are skimming fleetest,
Love, one moment think of me.

I'd not ask you to remember
Me when life is dull and drear;
When your hopes are but an ember
From a cold and vanished year;

Sorrow's far too bleak a burden
To retain in mem'ry's hall.
Friendship has no greater guerdon
Than to happiness recall.

So, when roses scent the twilight
Air with ling'ring dew damp breath,
Please remember me as eye-bright
Faith remembers until death.

I'd Have You Think of Me

Djuna Barnes (1892-1982)

As one who, leaning on the wall, once drew
Thick blossoms down, and hearkened to the hum
Of heavy bees slow rounding the wet plum,
And heard across the fields the patient coo
Of restless birds bewildered with the dew.
As one whose thoughts were mad in painful May,
With melancholy eyes turned toward her love,
And toward the troubled earth whereunder throve
The chilly rye and coming hawthorn spray—
With one lean, pacing hound, for company.

Evadne

Hilda Doolittle (1916-1961)

Il first tasted under Apollo's lips,
love and love sweetness,
I, Evadne;
my hair is made of crisp violets
or hyacinth which the wind combs back
across some rock shelf;
I, Evadne,
was mate of the god of light.

His hair was crisp to my mouth,
as the flower of the crocus,
across my cheek,
cool as the silver-cress
on Eros bank;
between my chin and throat,
his mouth slipped over and over.

Still between my arm and shoulder,
I feel the brush of his hair,
and my hands keep the gold they took,
as they wandered over and over,
that great arm-full of yellow flowers.