

### **Loveliest of Trees** (Alfred Edward 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.

### **The Year's at the Spring** (Robert Browning)

The year's at the spring  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hillside's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn:  
God's in His heaven—  
All's right with the world!

### **Silent Noon** (Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,—  
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:  
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms  
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.  
All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,  
Are golden kingcup fields with silver edge  
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge.  
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.

Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly  
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky:—  
So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.  
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,  
This close-companioned inarticulate hour  
When twofold silence was the song of love.

**S'il est un charmant gazon** (Victor Hugo)

S'il est un charmant gazon  
Que le ciel arrose,  
Où naît en toute saison  
Quelque fleur éclos,  
Où l'on cueille à pleine main  
Lys, chèvrefeuille et jasmin,  
J'en veux faire le chemin  
Où ton pied se pose!

S'il est un sein bien aimant  
Dont l'honneur dispose,  
Dont le tendre dévouement  
N'a rien de morose,  
Si toujours ce noble sein  
Bat pour un digne dessein,  
J'en veux faire le coussin  
Où ton front se pose!

S'il est un rêve d'amour  
Parfumé de rose,  
Où l'on trouve chaque jour  
Quelque douce chose,  
Un rêve que Dieu bénit,  
Où l'âme à l'âme s'unit,  
Oh! j'en veux faire le nid  
Où ton cœur se pose!

**Du bist die Ruh** (Friedrich Rückert)

Du bist die Ruh,  
Der Friede mild,  
Die Sehnsucht du,  
Und was sie stillt.

Ich weihe dir  
Voll Lust und Schmerz  
Zur Wohnung hier  
Mein Aug' und Herz.

Kehr' ein bei mir,  
Und schliesse du  
Still hinter dir  
Die Pforten zu.

Treib andern Schmerz  
Aus dieser Brust.  
Voll sei dies Herz  
Von deiner Lust.

Dies Augenzelt  
Von deinem Glanz  
Allein erhellt,  
O füll' es ganz.

**If there is a lovely lawn**

If there is a lovely lawn  
Which heaven waters,  
Where born every season  
is some blooming flower,  
Where one picks by the handful  
Lillies, honeysuckle, and jasmine,  
I would like to make a path  
Where your foot might step.

If there is loving breast  
Where honour resides,  
Whose tender devotion  
Is never morose,  
If always this noble breast  
Beats for a worthy purpose,  
I would like to make of it the cushion  
On which your forehead might rest.

If there is a dream of love  
Scented with roses,  
Where one finds each day  
Some sweet thing,  
A dream that God blesses,  
Where soul to soul is united,  
Oh! I would like to make a nest  
Where your heart might rest!

**You are repose**

You are repose,  
Gentle peace,  
You are longing,  
And what stills it.

I consecrate to you  
Full of joy and pain  
As a dwelling here  
My eyes and heart.

Come to me  
And close  
Quietly behind you  
The gates.

Drive other pain  
Out of this breast.  
Let my heart be full  
Of your joy.

The temple of my eyes  
By your radiance  
Alone is illumined,  
Oh, fill it completely.

**Im Haine** (Franz Ritter von Bruchmann)

Sonnenstrahlen  
Durch die Tannen,  
Wie sie fallen,  
Ziehn von dannen  
Alle Schmerzen,  
Und im Herzen  
Wohnet reiner Friede nur.

Stilles Sausen  
Lauer Lüfte,  
Und im Brausen  
Zarte Düfte,  
Die sich neigen  
Aus den Zweigen,  
Atmet aus die ganze Flur.

Wenn nur immer  
Dunkle Bäume,  
Sonnenschimmer,  
Grüne Säume  
Uns umblühten  
Und umglühten,  
Tilgend aller Qualen Spur!

**In the Wood**

Sunbeams  
Through the fir trees  
How they fall,  
Draw from there  
All pain,  
And in our hearts  
Dwells pure peace only.

The still murmuring  
Of warm breezes,  
And the whispering  
Delicate scents  
Float down  
From the branches  
Breathing gently on the entire meadow

If only  
The dark trees,  
The sun's shimmer,  
The green forest edge  
Were to blossom  
And glow all around us  
Erasing every trace of pain!

**Dark Lullaby** (Polish poem by Krzysztof Kamil Baczynski, English translation by Norbert Palej)

Sleep,  
All is quiet.  
Night is growing and rain hits the window.  
The wind, blind wind, like me before our home kneels down.  
Who took that time from us, free from fear, tell me  
My love?

**Soir d'hiver** (Nadia Boulanger)

Une jeune femme berce son enfant.  
Elle est seule, elle pleure, mais elle chante,  
Car il faut bien qu'il entende  
la chanson douce et tendre pour qu'il s'endorme.

"Voici Noël, mon petit enfant bleu.  
Les cloches sonneront  
pour que tu sois joyeux."

Celui qu'elle aime est parti...  
et la chanson s'arrête!  
Elle dit:  
"Où est-il à cette heure?  
Entend-il ma voix?  
et sait-il que je vis?"

**Winter Evening** (trans. Stéphanie McKay-Turgeon)

A young woman cradles her child.  
She is alone, she weeps, but she sings,  
For he needs to hear  
the soft, tender song so that he will fall asleep.

"Christmas is here, my little blue\* child.  
The bells will chime  
so that you can be happy."

The man she loves is gone  
and then the song stops!  
She says:  
"Where is he now?  
Does he hear my voice?  
and does he know that I live?"

Elle pleure si simplement  
que le coeur en a mal.  
Elle regarde son fils  
et cherche s'il ressemble  
à celui qu'elle attend inlassablement,  
de toute son âme, de toute sa tendresse!

She weeps so simply  
that the heart aches.  
She looks at her son  
and searches to see if he resembles  
him whom she awaits tirelessly,  
with all of her soul, with all her tenderness!

Elle pleure, mais elle espère!  
Elle entend de loin la Victoire,  
elle devine la lutte sans merci,  
mais elle croit à la Justice,  
elle sait que toute une vie s'est donnée,  
joyeuse et fière, et elle attend,  
Auprès de ce berceau si petit,  
qui tient le coeur d'un homme.

She weeps, but she hopes!  
She hears the Victory from afar,  
she imagines the merciless battle,  
but she believes in Justice,  
she knows that an entire life has been given,  
joyful and proud, and she waits,  
by this small cradle  
that holds the heart of a man.

*\*French soldiers of the First World War were referred to as 'Bleus', or bluets (for the younger soldiers) because of the color of their uniforms. Here, Boulanger likely suggests that the child's father is at war. (Arthur H. Warner, "Slang and Slogans of War in France," Current History (New York) 7, no. 1 (December 1, 1917): 250–52.)*

### **To be somebody** (Langston Hughes)

Little girl  
Dreaming of a baby grand piano  
(Not knowing there's a Steinway bigger, bigger)  
Dreaming of a baby grand to play  
That stretches paddle-tailed across the floor,  
Not standing upright  
Like a bad boy in the corner,  
But sending music  
Up the stairs and down the stairs  
And out the door  
To confound even Hazel Scott  
Who might be passing!

Oh!

Little boy  
Dreaming of the boxing gloves  
Joe Louis wore,  
The gloves that sent  
Two dozen men to the floor.  
Knockout!  
Bam! Bop! Mop!

There's always room,  
They say,  
At the top.

### **O you whom I often and silently come** (Walt Whitman)

O you whom I often and silently come where you are that I may be with you,  
As I walk by your side or sit near, or remain in the same room with you,  
Little you know the subtle electric fire that for your sake is playing within me.

### **Joy Alone (Connection)** (Gini Savage)

the stunning silence of myself  
from the heart of forests  
middle of mountains  
a late low sun rests her friendly hand  
on the crowns of uncompromised trees  
a fox streaks across the sand and scented sage brush  
a chatter of chipmunks scatters squirrels  
who stuff their briefcases for the winter  
blue-collar workers long term plans  
the resinous crunch of orange pine needles warm under foot  
a windfall of sweet cones  
joy alone

a startle of saplings  
the power of trees  
unraveling of rivers  
joy alone

### **Sure on this Shining Night** (James Agee)

Sure on this shining night  
Of star made shadows round,  
Kindness must watch for me  
This side the ground.  
The late year lies down the north.  
All is healed, all is health.  
High summer holds the earth.  
Hearts all whole.  
Sure on this shining night I weep for wonder wand'ring far  
alone  
Of shadows on the stars.

### **Die liebende schreibt** (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

Ein Blick von deinen Augen in die meinen,  
Ein Kuß von deinem Mund auf meinem Munde,  
Wer davon hat, wie ich, gewisse Kunde,  
Mag dem was anders wohl erfreulich scheinen?

Entfernt von dir, entfremdet von den Meinen,  
Da führ ich die Gedanken in die Runde,  
Und immer treffen sie auf jene Stunde,  
Die einzige; da fang ich an zu weinen.

Die Träne trocknet wieder unversehens:  
Er liebt ja, denk ich, her in diese Stille,  
O solltest du nicht in die Ferne reichen?

Vernimm das Lispeln dieses Liebewehens;  
Mein einzig Glück auf Erden ist dein Wille,  
Dein freundlicher, zu mir; gib mir ein Zeichen!

### **The Beloved Writes**

A glance from your eyes into mine,  
A kiss from your mouth upon my mouth,  
Can one, as I, assured of these things,  
Take pleasure in anything else?

Far from you, separated from my family,  
I let my thoughts roam constantly,  
And always they fix upon that hour,  
That single hour; and I begin to weep.

Suddenly my tears are dried again:  
He loves indeed, I think, here in this stillness,  
Oh, should you not reach out to me in the distance?

Hear these whispered words of love;  
My sole happiness on earth is your will,  
Your kind will to me, give me a sign!

**An Ariette for Music** (Percy Bysshe Shelley)

As the moon's soft splendour  
O'er the faint cold starlight of Heaven  
Is thrown,  
So your voice most tender  
To the strings without soul had then given  
Its own.

The stars will awaken,  
Though the moon sleep a full hour later,  
To-night;  
No leaf will be shaken  
Whilst the dews of your melody scatter  
Delight.

Though the sound overpowers,  
Sing again, with your dear voice revealing  
A tone  
Of some world far from ours,  
Where music and moonlight and feeling  
Are one.

**Prayer** (Langston Hughes)

Gather up  
In the arms of your pity  
The sick, the depraved,  
The desperate, the tired,  
All the scum  
Of our weary city.

Gather up  
In the arms of your pity.  
Gather up  
In the arms of your love—  
Those who expect  
No love from above.

**Not in vain** (Emily Dickinson)

If I can stop one heart from breaking,  
I shall not live in vain:  
If I can ease one life the aching,  
Or cool one pain,  
Or help one fainting robin  
Unto his nest again,  
I shall not live in vain.

**Songs for the People** (Francis Ellen Watkins Harper)

Let me make the songs for the people,  
Songs for the old and young;  
Songs to stir like a battle-cry  
Wherever they are sung.

Not for the clashing of sabres,  
For carnage nor for strife;  
But songs to thrill the hearts of men  
With more abundant life.

Let me make the songs for the weary,  
Amid life's fever and fret,  
Till hearts shall relax their tension,  
And careworn brows forget.

Let me sing for little children,  
Before their footsteps stray,  
Sweet anthems of love and duty,  
To float o'er life's highway.

I would sing for the poor and aged,  
When shadows dim their sight;  
Of the bright and restful mansions,  
Where there shall be no night.

Our world, so worn and weary,  
Needs music, pure and strong,  
To hush the jangle and discords  
Of sorrow, pain, and wrong.

Music to soothe all its sorrow,  
Till war and crime shall cease;  
And the hearts of men grown tender  
Girdle the world with peace.