

*Selection of Poems*  
*for the*  
*Poetry Competition*

*Friday 9th, 2018*

*Classes de 811 et 812 - LV2 anglais*



Zollinger Alexandre

**“A Caged Bird”**  
**Sarah Orne Jewett (1849-1909)**

*This is one of the 19 poems collected and published in the « Verses » seven years after Jewett's death. The feeling of isolation that comes from the description of the caged bird also reflects the condition of women in the rural New England.*

High at the window in her cage  
The old canary flits and sings,  
Nor sees across the curtain pass  
The shadow of a swallow's wings.

She gathers piteous bits and shreds,  
This solitary, mateless thing,  
To patient build again the nest  
So rudely scattered spring by spring;

And sings her brief, unlisted songs,  
Her dreams of bird life wild and free,  
Yet never beats her prison bars  
At sound of song from bush or tree.

She will be heard; she chirps me loud,  
When I forget those gravest cares,  
Her small provision to supply,  
Clear water or her seedsman's wares.

What can my life seem like to her?  
A dull, unpunctual service mine;  
Stupid before her eager call,  
Her flitting steps, her insight fine.

To open wide thy prison door,  
Poor friend, would give thee to thy foes;  
And yet a plaintive note I hear,  
As if to tell how slowly goes

The time of thy long prisoning.  
Bird! does some promise keep thee sane?  
Will there be better days for thee?  
Will thy soul too know life again?

Ah, none of us have more than this:  
If one true friend green leaves can reach  
From out some fairer, wider place,  
And understand our wistful speech!

**« Insomnia »**  
**Elizabeth Bishop (1927-1979)**

*This poem is from Bishop's collection « The Complete Poems ». It is a 6 lines by 3 stanzas structure. Each stanza has a different feel but they all deal with the idea that nighttime brings out all the things in the day that we couldn't focus on. We dwell on things at night, and that's what causes us to lose sleep.*

The moon in the bureau mirror  
looks out a million miles  
(and perhaps with pride, at herself,  
but she never, never smiles)  
far and away beyond sleep, or  
perhaps she's a daytime sleeper.

By the Universe deserted,  
she'd tell it to go to hell,  
and she'd find a body of water,  
or a mirror, on which to dwell.  
So wrap up care in a cobweb  
and drop it down the well

into that world inverted  
where left is always right,  
where the shadows are really the body,  
where we stay awake all night,  
where the heavens are shallow as the sea  
is now deep, and you love me

Eve Monceau

**‘Merry-go-round’**  
**Langston Hughes (1902-1967)**

*Langston Hughes was an American poet and activist, he is known as the leader of the harlem renaissance. He wrote about this periode and segregation. Here, Hughes tries to show the segragation by the way of the look of a child. He mixes innocence and racism in order to show how the segragation that segregation is pervasive.*

Where is the Jim Crow section  
On this merry-go-round,  
Mister, cause I want to ride?  
Down South where I come from  
White and colored  
Can't sit side by side.  
Down South on the train  
There's a Jim Crow car.

On the bus we're put in the back—  
But there ain't no back  
To a merry-go-round!  
Where's the horse  
For a kid that's black?

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*Jim Crow* : Jim Crow laws were state and local laws that enforced racial segregation the Southern United States. A Jim Crow Section is a section for African Americans after the Jim Crow laws.

*Merry-go-round* : manège

Charlie Serpolet

## **“Beyond the Red River”**

**Thomas McGrath (1916 – 1990)**

*McGrath's collection entitled "Selected Poems (1938-1988)" was published in 1988. The scene takes place in autumn, so it enables to represent the vision of the American poet of the change from one season to another one, more particularly the transformation of nature.*

The birds have flown their summer skies to the south,  
And the flower-money is drying in the banks of bent grass  
Which the bumble bee has abandoned. We wait for a winter lion,  
Body of ice-crystals and sombrero of dead leaves.

A month ago, from the salt engines of the sea,  
A machinery of early storms rolled toward the holiday houses  
Where summer still dozed in the pool-side chairs, sipping  
An aging whiskey of distances and departures.

Now the long freight of autumn goes smoking out of the land.  
My possibles are all packed up, but still I do not leave.  
I am happy enough here, where Dakota drifts wild in the universe,  
Where the prairie is starting to shake in the surf of the winter dark.

**" Song of Myself " (Section 52)**

**Walt Whitman (1819-1892)**

*This last part of a long poem deals with the death of the poet. He slowly disappears and returns to the ground, where he seems to get omnipresent and to pervade every living being, in perfect harmony with nature.*

*The spotted hawk<sup>1</sup> swoops by and accuses me, he complains of my gab and my loitering.*

*I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable,  
I sound my barbaric yawp<sup>2</sup> over the roofs of the world.*

*The last scud<sup>3</sup> of day holds back for me,  
It flings<sup>4</sup> my likeness after the rest and true as any on the shadow'd wilds,  
It coaxes me to the vapor and the dusk.*

*I depart as air, I shake my white locks at the runaway sun,  
I effuse my flesh in eddies<sup>5</sup>, and drift it in lacy jags.*

*I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,  
If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles.*

*You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,  
But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,  
And filter and fibre your blood.*

*Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,  
Missing me one place search another,  
I stop somewhere waiting for you.*

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1 Hawk = faucon

2 Yawp = cri

3 To scud = filer, glisser (s'applique aux nuages)

4 To fling = to throw

5 Eddy = tourbillon

Claudia Cano

**“Infancy”**  
**Elizabeth Bishop (1911 – 1979)**

*This poem is about a little boy who lives in Brazil. He describes his family and his quiet life in the fields in which they live, having inherited the history of slavery.*

My father got on his horse and went to the field.  
My mother stayed sitting and sewing.  
My little brother slept.  
A small boy alone under the mango trees,  
I read the story of Robinson Crusoe,  
the long story that never comes to an end.

At noon, white with light, a voice that had learned  
lullabies long ago in the slave-quarters – and never forgot –  
called us for coffee.  
Coffee blacker than the black old woman  
delicious coffee  
good coffee.

My mother stayed sitting and sewing  
watching me:  
Shh – don’t wake the boy.  
She stopped the cradle when a mosquito had lit  
and gave a sigh... how deep!  
Away off there my father went riding  
through the farm’s endless wastes.

And I didn’t know that my story  
was prettier than that of Robinson Crusoe.

*Naomi Cordiez Sedivy*

***“Bird Girl”, S. J. Goldner***

Some say I may just be  
Stretching my wings.  
“Oh don’t worry, she’s just  
Stretching her wings.  
Yes, she’ll settle down soon.”

No—no, you see,  
This is an explosion inside  
One of the best of it’s kind.  
No—no, you see,  
I’m learning to fly.



## “The Land of Counterpane”

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

*The poem is part of Stevenson’s collection entitled A Child’s Garden of Verses. It is told from the perspective of a child sick in bed. Despite his illness, the child re-creates a world using his imagination, his bed and his toys. More than a naive game, this poem praises imagination as a way to turn the bitterness of reality into joy and to see the world with a new eye. It suggests how creation makes humans feel free and powerful.*

When I was sick and lay a-bed,  
I had two pillows at my head,  
And all my toys beside me lay,  
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so  
I watched my leaden soldiers go,  
With different uniforms and drills<sup>2</sup>,  
Among the bed-clothes, through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets<sup>3</sup>  
All up and down among the sheets;  
Or brought my trees and houses out,  
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still  
That sits upon the pillow-hill,  
And sees before him, dale<sup>4</sup> and plain,  
The pleasant land of counterpane.

<sup>1</sup>Counterpane: a bedspread (a decorative cloth used to cover a bed when it is not in use).

<sup>2</sup>Drill: an instruction or training in military exercises.

<sup>3</sup>Fleet: a group of ships sailing together, engaged in the same activity, or under the same ownership.

<sup>4</sup>Dale: a valley, especially in northern England.

**Tieno Barbance**

**« Invictus »  
William Henley (1849-1903)**

*This poem was written by William Henley in 1875 and published in 1888. It is mainly known for having inspired Nelson Mandela while he was imprisoned. The movie Invictus, directed by Clint Eastwood and released in 2009 payed homage to this poem.*

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

Laura Leponce

“Funeral Blues”  
W.H Auden (1907-1973)

*The poem has a pretty complicated history. Auden first wrote it in 1936 as part of The Ascent of F6, a play that he co-wrote with Christopher Isherwood; the poem was satirical. Then, two years later, Auden reworked the poem and turned it into a no-longer satirical cabaret. In 1994, it was featured in the British romantic comedy Four Weddings and a Funeral. And since the film, the poem has been taken really seriously as a dirge (a mourning song, usually sung at a funeral).*

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 forever: 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.

Marie Martin

“Against constancy”  
John Wilmot (1647 – 1680)

*Against faithful relationship, this poem praises free and libertine ones. Assuming that men and women are incapable of fidelity, we can also read in this poem a certain fear of being vulnerable in a monogamous relationship. More defensive than offensive, this poem also permits Rochester to boast his own sexual prowess.*

Tell me no more of constancy  
The frivolous pretense  
Of cold age, narrow jealousy  
Disease and want of sense

Let duller fools, on whom kind chance  
Some easy hearts has thrown  
Despairing higher to advance  
Be kind to one alone

Old men and weak, whose idle flame  
Their own defects discovers,  
Since changing can but spread their shame,  
Ought to be constant lovers.

But we, whose hearts do justly swell  
With no vainglorious pride,  
Who know how we in love excel,  
Long to be often tried.

Then bring my bath, and strew my bed,  
As each kind night returns;  
I'll change a mistress till I'm dead –  
And fate change me to worms.

Sven Keromnes

“WANDER-THIRST”

Gerald Gould (1885-1936)

*In this poem, Gerald Gould expresses his urge to travel across the world and to explore the unknown, even if that means leaving his loved ones behind. This is also linked to a famous literary topos called “carpe diem”, which means “seize the day” in latin.*

BEYOND the East the sunrise, beyond the West the sea,  
And East and West the wander-thirst that will not let me be;  
It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say good-bye;  
For the seas call, and the stars call, and oh! the call of the sky!

I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue hills are;  
But a man can have the sun for a friend, and for his guide a star;  
And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is heard,  
For the rivers call, and the roads call, and oh! the call of the bird!

Yonder\* the long horizon lies, and there by night and day  
The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail away;  
And come I may, but go I must, and, if men ask you why,  
You may put the blame on the stars and the sun and the white road and the sky.

*Yonder: over there, usually within sight.*

**« The flea »**  
**John Donne (1572-1631)**

*« The flea\* » is a cheeky seductive love poem. The poet persona intends to persuade his beloved one to accept his advances. Religious undertones are used to subvert the conventional moral standpoint that sexual love is only possible within wedlock. Analogies are used to convince the lover that surrendering her virginity is not different from a flea's bite.*

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,  
How little that which thou deniest me is;  
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,  
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;  
Thou know'st that this cannot be said  
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,  
Yet this enjoys before it woo,  
And pampered swells with one blood made of two,  
And this, alas, is more than we would do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,  
Where we almost, nay more than married are.  
This flea is you and I, and this  
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;  
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,  
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.  
Though use make you apt to kill me,  
Let not to that, self-murder added be,  
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since  
Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence?  
Wherein could this flea guilty be,  
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?  
Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou  
Find'st not thy self, nor me the weaker now;  
'Tis true; then learn how false, fears be:  
Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,  
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

\* a flea = une puce

Emma Bertholon

**One Art**  
**Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979)**

*The poem is part of Bishop's collection entitled Geography III. This poem is a villanelle a traditional nineteen-line poetic form. It is about the feeling of loss, « the art of losing ». It is beginning with the loss of futile things as key, then Bishop mentions in a climax the loss of important things as the loss of a land then the loss of a loved one (certainly evoking her own mourning) which are like disaster.*

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.

Pauline Cagnol

« Requiescat »  
Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)

*When he was 12, Wilde's sister, Isola, suddenly became ill and died. This poem is an elegy, written about the death of his sister. He was 19 when he wrote this poem, and called it Requiescat, which is latin for « May she rest ». It is a simple poem in which the theme of death and sadness is conveyed to the reader through a number of effective techniques - tone, rhythm, imagery and rhyme.*

Tread lightly, she is near  
Under the snow,  
Speak gently, she can hear  
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair  
Tarnished with rust,  
She that was young and fair  
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,  
She hardly knew  
She was a woman, so  
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,  
Lie on her breast,  
I vex my heart alone,  
She is at rest.

Peace, peace, she cannot hear  
Lyre or sonnet,  
All my life's buried here,  
Heap earth upon it.



Flavie Albuisson

**« Travel »**  
**Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-1950)**

*In this poem, Edna St. Vincent Millay expresses a strong desire to travel. The train is used as a symbol of the possibility to travel. Even if the lyrical narrator is pleased with his present life as he has friends who means a lot to him, he always feels a sudden urge of travelling.*

The railroad track is miles away,  
And the day is loud with voices speaking,  
Yet there isn't a train goes by all day  
But I hear its whistle shrieking.

All night there isn't a train goes by,  
Though the night is still for sleep and dreaming,  
But I see its cinders red on the sky,  
And hear its engine steaming.

My heart is warm with the friends I make,  
And better friends I'll not be knowing ;  
Yet there isn't a train I wouldn't take,  
No matter where it's going.

Louise HEBRARD

**« Could be »**  
**Langston Hughes (1902-1967)**

*The poem is part of « The collected poems of Langston Hughes ». The places quoted here represent some places which are important for the African-Americans' history. For example, Lenox Avenue, in New York is also called Malcolm X Boulevard.*

Could be Hastings Street,  
Or Lenox Avenue,  
Could be 18th & Vine  
And still be true.

Could be 5th & Mound,  
Could be Rampart:  
When you pawned<sup>1</sup> my watch  
You pawned my heart.

Could be you love me,  
Could be that you don't.  
Might be that you'll come back,  
Like as not you won't.

Hastings Street is weary<sup>2</sup>,  
Also Lenox Avenue.  
Any place is dreary<sup>3</sup>  
Without my watch and you.

1. to pawn : mettre en gage
2. weary : las, fatigué
3. dreary : morne

[Tapez un texte]

Lou Bertinatti

**“Sonnet on the massacre of Christians in Bulgaria”**

**Oscar Wilde (1854-1900).**

*The poem is part of Oscar Wilde’s collection entitled “Poems”. It was published in 1881. The poem refers to the recent events of the time: two massacres of thousands of Christians in Bulgaria by the Ottoman Empire in 1876 (in Batak) and in 1876 (in Stara Zagora). The poem is a sceptical piece asking the general question of why god allows violence against the innocent.*

CHRIST, dost thou live indeed? or are thy bones  
Still straightened in their rock-hewn sepulchre?  
And was thy Rising only dreamed by Her  
Whose love of thee for all her sin atones?

For here the air is horrid with men’s groans,  
The priests who call upon thy name are slain,  
Dost thou not hear the bitter wail of pain  
From those whose children lie upon the stones?

Come down, O Son of God! incestuous gloom  
Curtains the land, and through the starless night  
Over thy Cross the Crescent moon I see!

If thou in very truth didst burst the tomb  
Come down, O Son of Man! and show thy might,  
Lest Mahomet be crowned instead of Thee!

Yola Dumont

**“Roman Wall Blues”  
Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973)**

*The poem is the desultory monologue of an unnamed Roman soldier, who is pacing the wall, in a damp and dull atmosphere. His thoughts are sour and chaotic but in the end, he finally manages to quiet his mind, by simply looking at the sky and accepting that he can't control everything : neither the weather nor the way other people behave.*

Over the heather the wet wind blows,  
I've lice in my tunic and a cold in my nose.

The rain comes pattering out of the sky,  
I'm a Wall soldier, I don't know why.

The mist creeps over the hard grey stone,  
My girl's in Tungria ; I sleep alone.

Aulus goes hanging around her place,  
I don't like his manners, I don't like his face.

Piso's a Christian, he worships a fish ;  
There'd be no kissing if he had his wish.

She gave me a ring but I dived it away ;  
I want my girl and I want my pay.

When I'm a veteran with only one eye  
I shall do nothing but look at the sky.

<sup>1</sup>*Heather* : a wild plant with small purple, pink or white flowers

<sup>2</sup>*Lice (pl) = a louse* : a small insect that lives on the bodies of humans and animals

<sup>3</sup>*To worship* : to show respect for a god, especially by saying prayers

→ *He worships a fish* : because “*ichthys*” (a Greek word for fish) was a rebus for Christ

Laura BENCHENAFI

## “Mr Tambourine Man”

by Bob Dylan, *Nobel Price of Literature in 2016*

*The subject of the song is escape – escape from the ghastliness, as perceived by the narrator, of everyday life. Throughout the song the narrator imagines he’s awake when he’s in fact asleep and dreaming. Much like Keat’s “Ode to a Nightingale”, this song is about getting inspiration*

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for  
me  
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm  
going to  
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for  
me  
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come  
followin' you

Though I know that evening's empire has  
returned into sand  
Vanished from my hand  
Left me blindly here to stand  
But still not sleeping  
My weariness amazes me, I'm branded on  
my feet  
I have no one to meet  
And the ancient empty street's too dead for  
dreaming  
Take me on a trip upon your magic swirlin'  
ship  
My senses have been stripped  
My hands can't feel to grip  
My toes too numb to step  
Wait only for my boot heels to be  
wanderin'  
I'm ready to go anywhere  
I'm ready for to fade  
Into my own parade

Cast your dancing spell my way  
I promise to go under it

And take me disappearing through the  
smoke rings of my mind  
Down the foggy ruins of time  
Far past the frozen leaves  
The haunted, frightened trees  
Out to the windy beach  
Far from the twisted reach  
Of crazy sorrow  
Yes, to dance beneath the diamond sky  
with one hand waving free  
Silhouetted by the sea  
Circled by the circus sands  
With all memory and fate  
Driven deep beneath the waves  
Let me forget about today  
Until tomorrow

Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for  
me  
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm  
going to  
Hey! Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for  
me  
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come  
followin' you

Claire MAISONNEUVE

## The Chimney Sweeper, William BLAKE (1757-1827)

*This poem tells the story of a child in the England of the time of William BLAKE ; he is forced to work by his parents, who left him behind to go and pray God the Priest and King at the church, whereas these three characters are liable for the misery of the child.*

A little black thing among the snow,  
Crying "'weep! 'weep!" in notes of woe !  
"Where are thy father and mother? Say?"  
"They are both gone up to the church to pray.

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

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

in Songs of Experience

Coralie Couronne

**“The Cat as Cat”  
Denise Levertov (1923-1997)**

*This poem is a description of a cat, giving the image of a little mysterious hunter. It insists also on the relationship between the cat and the poet, who is inspired by this animal and who tries to seize the profound nature of the cat.*

The cat on my bosom  
sleeping and purring  
—fur-petalled chrysanthemum,  
squirrel-killer—

is a metaphor only if I  
force him to be one,  
looking too long in his pale, fond,  
dilating, contracting eyes

that reject mirrors, refuse  
to observe what bides<sup>1</sup>  
stockstill.

Likewise<sup>2</sup>

flex and reflex of claws  
gently pricking through sweater to skin  
gently sustain their own tune,

not mine. I-Thou, cat, I-Thou.

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1 To bide = to stay in a certain place

2 Likewise = similarly, moreover

**"Fish in the Unruffled Lakes"**  
Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973)

*This untitled poem dates from Auden's earliest works when he was a student in Oxford and found tolerance there to expressed himself. It compares human love to that of animals. Even if we feel time and loss and guilt as we love each other so as to "turn an envious look" to the animals, our consciousness on the contrary expresses a responsible and human "voluntary love". That's hardly the worst recompense for our tortured consciousness.*

Fish in the unruffled\* lakes  
Their swarming\* colours wear,  
Swans in the winter air  
A white perfection have,  
And the great lion walks  
Through his innocent grove\* ;  
Lion, fish and swan  
Act, and are gone  
Upon Time's toppling\* wave.

We, till the shadowed days are done,  
We must weep and sing  
Duty's conscious wrong,  
The Devil in the clock  
The goodness carefully worn  
For atonement\* or for luck ;  
We must lose our loves,  
On each beast and bird that moves  
Turn an envious look.

Sighs for folly done and said  
Twist our narrow days,  
But I must bless, I must praise  
That you, my swan, who have  
All gifts that to the swan  
Impulsive Nature gave,  
The majesty and pride,  
Last night should add  
Your voluntary love.

**unruffled** : poised and serene especially in the face of setbacks or confusion. Smooth.

**swarming** : swarm = a large number of un/animated things massed together and usually in motion  
**grove** : a small wood without underbrush.

**toppling** : to fall from or as if from being top-heavy.

**atonement** : reparation for an offense or injury. Religious: reconciliation of God and humankind / atonement for having sinned.



## “Romance”

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

*The poem first appeared in 1929 as the preface of Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems, then it has been reworked and shortened. Here it is the most recent version. It is about the childhood's memories of the poet and his learning process of contemplation, romance opposed to his stressful adulthood through the metaphor of two exotic birds: the paroquet (childhood) and the condor (adulthood).*

Romance, who loves to nod and sing,  
With drowsy head and folded wing  
Among the green leaves as they shake  
Far down within some shadowy lake,  
To me a painted paroquet  
Hath been - a most familiar bird -  
Taught me my alphabet to say -  
To lisp my very earliest word  
While in the wild wood I did lie,  
A child - with a most knowing eye.

Of late, eternal Condor years  
So shake the very Heaven on high  
With tumult as they thunder by,  
I have no time for idle cares  
Through gazing on the unquiet sky.  
And when an hour with calmer wings  
Its down upon my spirit flings -  
To that little time with lyre and rhyme  
To while away - forbidden things!  
My heart would feel to be a crime  
Unless it trembled with the strings.

Anaïs Alotto

**“The Snow Man”**  
**Wallace Stevens (1879-1955)**

*This poem was published in Stevens' first collection entitled "Harmonium". It encourages the reader to behold his environment in a new way: he must be able to see a landscape for what it is and shouldn't try to transpose his feelings on it, fulfilling a kind of detachment and accepting he can't understand the sense of what he sees, so that he may have access to its beauty.*

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.

**“The Lake Isle of Innisfree”**  
**William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)**

*This poem describes nature as a peaceful and purifying place in which the poet, far from the reality of urbanisation, can release his true self. This is an elegy of nature in which it is described as a cathartic element.*

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.

Margaux Guilera

**“Mountain fable”**  
**Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)**

*In this poem, Emerson tells us not to judge others to try to understand that people that are different from us also have qualities that we don't have.*

The mountain and the squirrel\*  
Had a quarrel;  
And the former called the latter "Little Prig\*."  
Bun replied,  
"You are doubtless very big;  
But all sorts of things and weather  
Must be taken in together,  
To make up a year  
And a sphere.  
And I think it no disgrace  
To occupy my place.  
If I'm not as large as you,  
You are not so small as I,  
And not half so spry\*.  
I'll not deny you make  
A very pretty squirrel track;  
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;  
If I cannot carry forests on my back,  
Neither can you crack a nut."

\*a squirrel: a small animal covered in fur, which climbs trees and feeds on nuts.

\*a prig: someone who obeys the rules of correct behaviour and considers himself to be morally better than other people.

\*spry: active and able to move quickly and energetically.

*The Second Coming*  
Michael Robartes and the dancer (1921)  
W. B. YEATS

Turning and turning in the widening gyre<sup>1</sup>  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere<sup>2</sup> 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*<sup>3</sup>  
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<sup>4</sup>,  
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,  
Slouches<sup>5</sup> towards Bethlehem to be born?

<sup>1</sup>Gyre : tourbillon

<sup>2</sup>Mere = simple

<sup>3</sup>Spiritus mundi : "a universal memory and a 'muse' of sorts that provides inspiration to the poet or writer." (Yeats)

<sup>4</sup>Cradle : berceau

<sup>5</sup>To slouch : être avachi, avoir le dos courbé

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- Anais Alotto  
- Roxane Depelris  
- Yola Dumont

- Jiens Barbance  
- Laura Bencherif  
- Nadezhda Dobras