

THE MESSAGE OF THE WEST

AN ODE

Delivered June 16, 1903, at the Dedication
of the Auditorium, Presented by Mr. and Mrs. Charles
M. Schwab to the Pennsylvania State College.

Fred Lewis Pattee

A poem is a glimpse, a faltering ray

From out that larger day;

A single glimpse through mist, and night, and cloud,

To some rare soul allowed;

A flash from outer ether caught

And bodies into word, or deed, or thought.

A waif it is from that intenser life;

A moment when a soul is found in key,

One rapturous moment when a soul may see

The pattern blurred stand sharp, and in the strife

And discord feel God's harmony.

Then if the hand may seize

And fix the radiant vision ere it flees,

It stands forever, lone, sublime, apart,

A thing to thrill, a thing to lift the heart,

A truth, a bit of God,—immortal art.

THE MOUNTAIN

Jason Charnesky

1994

All earth is slow to human eyes,

She seldom leaps up in surprise

or out of her stoney quiet slumber wake

to rumple her bright prairie quilts and shake

the dull plains into mountain range

or fold white sheets of limestone strata

into neatly tucked new hills

or pile her rocky pillows in one heap

of glacier and moraine,

or light her way among the grey night's stars

by setting off a lava flow

or (letting all decorum go)

ignite a bonfire of volcanic ash

or buckle overnight a mile-high peak

or scratch herself and leave the trace

of the Grand Canyon on her face.

So I have been taught is the tone

of earth's desire, more gradual than stone.

Today I hiked the mountain with my love,

Honeysuckle bloomed and ferns fiddled out

and mushrooms made their crafty resurrection

at base of oak and maple, sumac and sweet gum.

So far away from our own world we could not

see either Centre Hall or College Heights,

or yesterday's argument or tomorrow's rage.

Past charred fire pit and displaced beer can

and Indian pipes and jack in the pulpit

we walked, till the sun poked through

the young oak leaves making the warm ground glow

and even my faithless hand shone in that light.

And love peeked out a moment

as quiet as the earth.

And I said nothing.

LOVELY OCTOBER

Joseph Grucci

from *This Autumn Surely* 1935

*Lovely October, red-gold and immortal,
Like a spread wing at sunset in my brain!
I have been waiting your outrageous coming,
Leaffooted, treading down the wind-slain!*

*I have been such a lover of autumn;
Listened to bronze leaves make a fabulous sound
As they sucked their last breath from nervous boughs,
Then made a secret noise upon the ground.*

*I have watched boys plunge knee-deep into heaps
Of leaves and fill their shoes with copper-gold
And heard their laughter mixed with joyous rage
At having so much beauty here to hold.*

*Lovely October, red-gold and immortal,
Like a spread wing at sunset in my brain!
I have been waiting your outrageous coming,
Leaffooted, treading down the wind-slain!*

**ELM TREES IN THE
EARLY CLOSE OF WINTER**

Emily Grosholz

from *Eden* 1992

*Elm trees in the early close
of winter take me by surprise
as dusk descends,
take on, without my leave
or wish, the color mauve.*

*A trick of atmosphere,
earth breathing an upward cloud,
or my imposed desire,
or rising sap that swells
to leaf in winter buds?*

*Elm tree, shape of my desire,
what is color's origin?
Perhaps the sun's
light reflex as it moves
under the world again.*

*Midweek I live alone,
Desires rise and fade
with nowhere else to go,
Lengthening day, the empty vases
fill and overflow.*

NOTEBOOK FOR MAY

Deborah Austin

from *The Paradise of the World* 1964

Nothing to say; only this morning
 saw these things. The sky
 branched and frilling over between crowding
 cherryflowers, sun
 buttering everything shiny;
 between the sky was
 flowers in every language
 hollering red and making
 sibilances and crispness
 of wet round stem, cool
 juicy petal, pink
 is nearly white, is nearly
 but never
 blue; sun drips
 in honey off these
 naive leaves. If you
 get far enough away from spring
 it makes a pattern; now
 brushing our lips
 and getting in our eyes,
 formless and breathing
 it is only
 here.

SUN

Melinda Mucha

from *Pivot* 1977

I went to the magical dandelion carnival,
 Spanish hot,
 Shimmering I danced.
 I danced to the magic smokeblower.
 He blew my name in the air glitter green,
 It shone for an instant,
 The rays of the sun beat down and it wavered.
 I danced away
 Danced under the sun,
 El sol.
 The eyes of the dwarf were yellow.
 He blinked it was cloudy
 He cried and it rained.
 I dried his tears and we dipped and we whirled
 And he sparkled all golden—
 I could see him no more.
 So I danced away
 Danced under the sun,
 The wonderful sun...
 The carousel fluted,
 I cried out with joy
 And leaped on a pony with musical mane and fiery eyes.
 We galloped away
 And followed a rainbow
 Up to the sun.

INTRODUCTION

Maya Spence

from *Pivot* 1974

You never know whom you may meet

May burst in upon you

Throw open wide the doors

To your carriage house

Take a bite of you,

You never know, so always be prepared

For the day when dictionaries explode

With unsaid words and graphic

Descriptions of the whirring universe

Spin gigantic snowflakes into oblivion

Or devour tiny ants with one soft lick.

III MISSA PAPAЕ MARCELLI

(PALESTRINA 1525-1594)

Deborah Austin

from *The Paradise of the World* 1964

For Palestrina, heaven was only singing.

*The bodies stayed below; the voices, ringing
serene and flawless through crystalline air,
touched the sky's dome and hung down, hiving there
piled on each other deep, like swarming bees,
until celestial impulse made them move
off on mysterious tangents, seeking love,
and bringing home triumphant harmonies.*

Milton saw seraphs in a burning row

who, burning, sang. Not Palestrina, though;

for him, the singing burned.

The voices, lost

for a moment, found their rest the same—

paused

crossed

caught on each other, and

burst into flame.

*Out of this burning rose a passion proved
by fire of every earthly guilt, and moved
higher by dissonance that cried for peace
until the fire-scarred found cool release
in cadences that fall like flowers of ice
in a long garland, down
linked in a garland, down
slowly and purely down
to earth
from Paradise.*

**DRYPOINT: EVENING OF
FIRST SNOW**

Deborah Austin

from *The Paradise of the World* 1964

The autumned land was dark all day;
a blind sky arched it, whitely grey—
light in itself, but none to spare
for iron earth, for barbèd air
In black and white the night came on;
the snow fell down; dark land was gone;
the dusk fell down among the snow,
but kept at bay by whiteness, though,
held off a little, then came back,
and the white sky itself was black.
Now, as the year and night turn old,
nothing is certain but the cold.
A white earth lights itself to bed;
a black sky towers overhead.
Wind, rumoring rage on every gust,
silts up the sills with icy dust
from that black field of combat, where
the white flakes charge dark, bitter air.

SPRING FEVER

Emily Grosholz

from *The River Painter* 1984

At the wood's edge trillium shows
mauve petals in three,
blood-root fragile white
planets down the ecliptic of the road,
I can do nothing better with my eyes
than seek the early risers out;
my self rides up and down,
teased from sterner purposes
by love and evolving spring.

Too restless to stay fixed
at my desk, which faces city streets
through windows darkening
with dust and spiderwork,
I ride my bicycle by morning
out to country at the city's edge.

I never touch the violets,
Quaker ladies massing in their dress
of blue and white, the common pinks
ignorant of their family's Latin title.
Empty-handed, given to pastoral,
by night I ride back to my lover's bed,
trailing names of flowers from the woods.

IN ALMOST JULY

Deborah Austin

from *The Paradise of the World* 1964

*This is the edge—
have fallen off the edge
into a green of summer; all the trees
bushing, like ill-tossed salads, and a frowse
of poppies tangled in the nextdoor grass;
roses; and children run on knobby legs toward evening—
hit each other with croquet mallets; the backyards
full of tears, and screendoors slam
on victims running to Tell. Oh yes, from now
till into August, after supper someone
takes a badtempered powermower to walk,
growling and spitting down between the hedges
in aqueous light under the spinach trees.
Peonies loll, blowsy in cool pink silk—
after a shower sometimes they cry real tears,
round and pathetic, but not very sad.
A cockney robin in a business suit
bustles alertly; he is Getting the Worm,
and knows it. Nobody else
wants to, this weather. This,
he does not know. Watching him work
is mint and lemon for the iced-tea mood
of this particular raga.*

I KNOW A ROAD

Joseph Grucci

from *This Autumn Surely* 1935

*I know a road, and I can find it still,
Though the bright asters and the hollyhocks
Invade the unfenced pathway from the hill,
To hush one's foot against the eye-blue phlox.

And yet I wonder if the sullen hill
That threatened it has made his menace good.
I know a road, and I can find it still—
Or something happened where a hill once stood.

Whether in moonlight or when night is black,
With red-gold autumn burning in my brain,
Let them say what they will behind my back,
I know a road that I must find again.*

from **GATHERING OF
FRIENDS AFTER THE FALL
OF THE SUNG DYNASTY**

Emily Grosholz

from *The River Painter* 1984

*I say that any man is equally brave
who can confess he loves his friends,
gives himself up to love of wine,
draws out the secrets of his heart
and hangs them up in black and white*

*Especially when outside the wing of night
engulfs the moon; bad fortune everywhere
plays with the bones of men; unearthly war
casts his red eye and brandishes his sword.*

FURNITURE

Dorothy Roberts

from *Extended* 1967

*The tables, chairs, sofa
Involved in their own arms, legs, feet, backs, stuffed seats
Were once quite an absolute form of law,*

*The children spill over them in the eternal flow
Of time and the generations, in a curious complication*

**Of how life is to grow.*

*The children break up the furniture from within
Without letting the parents know.*

THE BAT

Theodore Roethke

from *Open House* 1941

*By day the bat is cousin to the mouse,
He likes the attic of an aging house.*

*His fingers make a hat about his head,
His pulse beat is so slow we think him dead.*

*He loops in crazy figures half the night
Among the trees that face the corner light,*

*But when he brushes up against a screen,
We are afraid of what our eyes have seen:*

*For something is amiss or out of place
When mice with wings can wear a human face.*

MID-COUNTRY BLOW

Theodore Roethke

from *Open House* 1941

*All night and all day the wind roared in the trees,
Until I could think there were waves rolling high as my bedroom floor;
When I stood at the window, an elm bough swept to my knees;
The blue spruce lashed like a surf at the door.*

The second dawn I would not have believed:

The oak stood with each leaf stiff as a bell,

*When I looked at the altered scene, my eye was undeceived,
But my ear still kept the sound of the sea like a shell.*

WINTER FIRE

Jack McManis

Throat swelling ecstatic matins,
does the cardinal worship the sun?
Or has sun come up to worship him?
Why else would sun bother to rise
this Arctic dawn? In holy roller
frenzy does the flame bird warble
in tongues? No, only listen hard
and you'll catch the words: Joy! Joy!
To hell with protective coloring!
Let sun in, Let sun in, Let sun in
trills the blood bird, Make it sing,
Make it sing he goes on as if never
to stop. Red arsonist setting
my winter soul on fire, high over
a world of ice you carol messages
to the sun and to the poet in all of us.

APRIL SNOW

E. H. Knapp

Those epicures in ermine were the last
To leave. They slumped on summer furniture
And lounged about the yard to see that blast—
The end of revels—through, or to be sure
The sun would rise. Pristinely reprobate,
The drowsy rounders slouched and shifted, to roam
No more but silent sit and contemplate
The mounting disadvantages of home.
They may have come to foil the green of grass
Or give the hardy crocus tales to tell
The daffodils of these pale rogues, alas,
Who crashed a lovely garden party, fell,
And spent the night—not to apologize
Nor even to the flowers bid good-byes.

dandelions

Deborah Austin

from *The Paradise of the World* 1964

under cover of night and rain
the troops took over.
waking to total war in beleaguered houses
over breakfast we faced the batteries
marshalled by wall and stone, deployed
with a master strategy no one had suspected
and now all
firing

pow

all day, all yesterday
and all today
the barrage continued
deafening sight.
reeling now, eyes ringing from noise, from walking
gingerly over the mined lawns
exploded at every second
rocked back by the starshellfire
concussion of gold on green
bringing battle-fatigue

pow by lionface firefur pow by
goldburst shellshock pow by
whoosh splat splinteryyellow pow by
pow by pow
tomorrow smoke drifts up
from the wrecked battalions,
all the ammunition, firegold fury, gone.
smoke
drifts
thistle-blown
over the war-zone, only

here and there, in the shade by the
pear tree

pow in the crack by the
 curbstone *pow* and back of the
 ashcan, lonely
 guerrilla snipers, hoarding
 their fire shrewdly
 never

pow

 surrender

FOOD SONGS: THE EGG

J o h n H a a g

from *Pivot* 1981

Eggs, eggs, beautiful eggs
 —strange little creatures
 without any legs,
 exquisite ovals
 without any navels,
 no elbows or hair
 and nothing to wear,
 balder than whales
 in those elegant shells—
 Oh beautiful, beautiful, beautiful eggs!

S O N G T O A C O Y P A R E N T

J o h n H a a g

from *The Mirrored Man* 1961

Yes, tell me of the birds and bears
 And palpitating bees,
 Of ululating owls among
 The eucalyptus trees,

 Of cats and bulls and animals
 Too numerous to mention,
 And how the wind is pandar to
 The randy palm's intention;

 I'd like to know how porcupines
 Greet their inamoratas,
 And why the grunion runs aground
 In agitated stratas,

 Or how the frugal cuckoos find
 Impromptu incubators,
 And happy hens are setting on
 The eggs of alligators,

 O, tell me of countless foolish things—
 I'd welcome explanation,
 For, really, I'm intrigued by all
 This din of procreation,

**READING AT
THE ARTS FESTIVAL**

John Balaban

from *Pivot* 1981

*What are you doing here?
Why listen to this prattle?
What do you want a poem to do?
You can't take one home
like a pot or a painting.
A poem won't do
to spruce up a kitchen.
It's awfully hard
to find a place to hang one.
You get one home
and it makes a mess.
Strays don't know how to behave.
Even chihuahuas can bite.*

*The other day
I was parked at Grossman's Lumber
about to buy a sack of cement.
A soprano on the radio
was singing "Un Bel Di."
The hunger in her voice
was enough to make you cry.
Imagine, crying in a parking lot
in front of Grossman's Lumber.
It was the surprise. The haunting voice
that tells us that we're human
not just a jerk who wants to fix a porch.*

*When poems come calling,
they call from long ways off,
from distant places suddenly familiar
as words unlock
the shutters on our hearts
and windows are thrown open
to clearest morning light
on the finest of days
as we sit in a room furnished by the air.*

**SONG FOR THE
THUMB PIANO**

John Haag

*People come in so many pieces
People crack behind their masks
People stitch and patch their faces
And hope nobody asks*

*When people's faces fall to pieces
People stitch and patch their masks
People try to change their faces
Because nobody asks*

*People gather up the pieces
Dump them all into their masks
People throw away their faces
when no one*

no one

no one ever asks.

Note: The "Thumb Piano" has no sharps,
no flats and no chords—only eight full notes.

V E R N A L S E N T I M E N T

T h e o d o r e R o e t h k e

from *Open House* 1941

*Though the crocuses poke up their heads in the usual places,
The frog scum appear on the pond with the same froth of green,
And boys moon at girls with last year's fatuous faces,
I never am bored, however familiar the scene,*

*When from under the barn the cat brings a similar litter,—
Two yellow and black, and one that looks in between,—
Though it all happened before, I cannot grow bitter:
I rejoice in the spring, as though no spring ever had been.*

T H E P R E M O N I T I O N

T h e o d o r e R o e t h k e

from *Open House* 1941

*Walking this field I remember
Days of another summer.
Oh that was long ago! I kept
Close to the heels of my father,
Matching his stride with half-steps
Until we came to a river.
He dipped his hand in the shallow:
Water ran over and under
Hair on a narrow wrist bone;
His image kept following after,—
Flashed with the sun in the ripple.
But when he stood up, that face
Was lost in a maze of water.*

**E L E G Y F O R T H E S W A N S
A T G R A C E P O N D**

B r u c e W e i g l

from *What Saves Us* 1992

*Bored with bread the children throw to her,
the swan who lost her one great love
when he washed up, tangled in the cold dawn,
drowned in the roots of the willow,
clings to the blue pond and its amnesia,
Grief makes her circle the willow's shadow
where she waits for him to reappear
evenings when the light disappears
and each lap of waves grows greener.
Before a hole opened up in the life
they'd invented in the clouds,
we watched them tangle their necks
around each other, sailing side by side
as to save themselves from our world.*

T H E A P P L E S

D o r o t h y R o b e r t s

from *Self of Loss* 1965

*The apples were larger than the hand
Yet crisp to the heart and golden or red,
And biting into something so round
Gave as strong a sense as could be of the good world
Of that far countryside where the hills rolled
On and on under orchards and the wandering road.

We would go on an autumn day and walk as far
As the spread wing of the countryside could take us away,
Being still in our own land yet far away
Amid autumn furrows and the goldenrod.

And at the far end of the walk we would find these apples
On trees strayed almost to the edge of the forest,
Reaching through the far away of that land
For autumn epitomized in a single globe.*

INDIAN SUMMER

R o b e r t L i m a

*The season seems defiant of its normal role,
It fails to function with the usual stomp and clout
of snow and sleet, of ice beneath the feet,
of threat to life and limb if one goes out,*

*Instead, it gives the grey of winter a new dress
with larks in leafless trees, returning fowl
that bask in median temperatures of days in spring,
and turns its back upon the expectations of the owl.*

*There's no assurance it'll stay as such a while,
or even, for a happy time, con nature into thinking big.
But it provides a meantime respite in the scheme of things
from all-hail breaking loose and forcing winter's dig.*

"HAIKU" TRIO

B i l l H a n s o n

January 1988

Sound of walking in snow

Tangled web of sky

One feather

Bone breaks

Trees float in white

Eyes close

Iced river talks

Bird melts

Bare trees stand against white

One voice speaks

Heron flies

Remembered rose

DISTINCT

D o r o t h y R o b e r t s

from *Extended* 1967

*Over the pale fields
And the woods' dim grey
The night begins to fall,
I walk this way.*

*The stars begin to shine,
The woods grow black,
Across the crusted fields
I break a track.*

*Sparkle of many stars
The snow lying mute
Distinguish all I need
To take this route.*

OLD MAINIA

The Willow Froth February 1912

Standing at the crossing of two ways
Which carry past the myriad treading feet,
Old Willow, wilt thou be the first to greet
With leaves again the greening springtime days?
How many years yet memories wilt thou raise
In those returning from the busy street,
Memories of victory and defeat,
Of joys and griefs of long departed days?

Not many springs will see thy leafy maze,
Of drooping branches; few the sands that meet,

FROTHIANA

Terse Verses Froth December 1957

Hickory dickory dock
Three mice ran up the clock
The clock struck one
But the other two escaped.
Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall
All the King's horses
And all the King's men
Had Egnog.

Keats Froth September 1959

The poet Keats lay in his bed,
Penniless, sad and nearly dead.
No mighty verse was his creation.
Alas, he had no inspiration.
Then, a nightingale hopped on his sill
And handed him a dollar bill.
"Keats," it chirped in gentle tone,
"Remember, this is just a loan."
That's why Keats wrote, though wan and pale
Of what he "Owed to a Nightingale."

Old Mother Hubbard Froth March 1957

Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard
To get her poor daughter a dress,
When she got there,
The cupboard was bare,
And so was her daughter, I guess.

The Little Duckling Froth April 1952

No wonder the little duckling
Wears on his face a frown
For he has just discovered
His first pair of pants are down.

**THE GROOVES
OF ACADEME**

Freshman Complaint Froth July 1943

"We Beg to Call Your Attention to the Fact:"
Professor spewing toneless talk,
You are forcing me to mock
And mimic that which you attempt
To teach me. For I am exempt
This afternoon from facts, and ways
Of solving problems of writing plays,
Of speaking Spanish, of plotting charts,
Of learning to act dramatic parts,
Of drawing pictures, or reporting news,
Of trying to acquire intellectual views.
The nights are cool and the days are hot,
But you've forgotten what I have not—
That though we're here to go to College
We're seeking something more than knowledge.

The Party Froth April 1962

People grasping
cocktail glasses,
standing, gasping
teeming masses.
People smoking,
people drinking,
coughing, choking,

getting stinking,
Some repletely
boiled or fried,
some completely
ossified.
Liquor spilling,
trousers sopping,
steady swilling,
bodies dropping,
Glasses falling on the floor,
people calling
"Drop some more!"
Morals stretching, ceiling reitching
women squealing,
Heavy smoking,
air gets thicker,
someone croaking
"No more liquor."
What? What? WHAT?
No more liquor?
People snicker
unbelieving,
No more liquor?
Let's be leaving.
No more drinking,
groans and hisses,
what a stinking party this is.

Radical Rag Froth June 1965

"We Beg to Call Your Attention to the Fact:"

We're gassing and bombing,
And warmly napalming,
All three-year-old Reds in Viet, ho ho;
Though they persecute us
(And some even shoot us),
We ain't down yet, ho ho.

Courageous and surly,
Kentucky plants burley,
Lung cancer statistics or nyet, ho ho;
And Lyndon won't sell-y
His stock in the telly;
We ain't down yet, ho ho.
Defenders of God's
Still wield cattle prods's,
Though Governor Wallace regrets, ho ho;
The song of the Eastland
Still sings through the Southland;
We ain't down yet, ho ho.

With such staunch exemplars,
Crusading knights-templars,
The gentlemen foolish regret, ho ho,
To warn the author'ties
Who tore up our charties:
We ain't down yet.

"I hate the guys. . ." Froth December 1952

"I hate the guys
Who criticize
And minimize
The other guys
Whose enterprise
Has made them rise
Above the guys
Who criticize."

FROTHY ENCORES

Mary's Lamb I Froth May 1957

Mary had a little lamb
 A lobster and some prunes
 A glass of milk, a piece of pie
 And then some macaroons.
 It made the naughty waiters grin
 To see her order so
 And when they carried Mary out
 Her face was white as snow.

In the Moonlight Froth January 1943

He kissed her in the moonlight,
 She gave him little fight,
 She was a marble statue,
 He was a little tight.

Mary's Lamb II Froth October 1952

Mary had a little lamb
 The lamb had halitosis
 And every place that Mary went
 The people held their noses.

THE DESCANT OF MAN
THREE EVOLUTIONARY
LOVE SONGS

On Anthropoids Froth August 1942

When Charley R. Darwin first aired his conclusions
 He managed to shatter a wealth of illusions.
 Homo Sapien was plagued by assorted pangs
 To think of his forebearers, orang-utans,
 To dispose of those who remained to spoof
 Charley dug up morphological proof,
 And so he persuaded with argument luminous
 That man was descended from primates quadrumanous.
 'Tis thoughts such as these I wish to disperse
 Convinced that the case is quite the reverse,
 For everyone knows
 That since time began
 Woman's been making
 A monkey of man.

Natural Love Froth Autumn 1946

Much has been said in the movies
 About lovers on the screen,
 But I want to tell you the story
 Of the love of a Lima Bean.
 He was happy on his beanstalk
 Till one eventful morn
 When there before his dazzled eyes
 Grew a glorious ear of corn.
 He made love to her daily and
 She loved him for his dash
 So he and she were married
 And their kids are succotash.

Burning Kisses Froth February 1949

He asked for burning kisses,
 She said in accents cruel—
 "I may be a red-hot mamma,
 But I ain't nobody's fuel."

WILLOW SONGS
AN OLD COLLEGE
MEDLEY

Our Farewell Toast Froth June 1 9 1 4

Four years ago, four hundred strong,
We came to thee Penn State,
And now we leave for other worlds,
To tempt that goddess—Fate.

We've fought our scraps; we've had our fights;
Our men have brought thee fame,
We tried to make our humble lives
Bring glory to thy name.

As comrades now, we soon must part,—
Shake hands, perhaps for e'er,
So let us drink a toast to her,
The Queen of all the fair.

Here's a toast to our Alma Mater,
Here's a toast to her name so clean:
God give us strength to keep it so,—
The class of Old Fourteen.

The Campus Froth June 1 9 1 0

Oh, thou broad campus, green and gay
If thou could speak what would thou say?
What stirring memories thou dost hold
Of tales not in our histories told;
Of fierce encounters; scraps gone by,
The lower classman's battle cry.
The morning drill; the dress parade,
With studes in warriors' blue arrayed,
Upon thy seats beneath yon trees,
The strutting Seniors smoke in peace.
The Sophomores seek thy shady nooks,
And Juniors with their ponderous books.

Thy slopes have echoed many a sigh,
And naughty Sophomore's war-like cry,
While o'er thee now in joy serene,
Rides Duster in his gas machine,
Ah, many a fond sight thou hast seen
Thou dear old campus, fair and green.

1912 Froth June 1 9 1 2

Come, seniors, come, and let us sing,
Let all our voices raise;
Let's sing a song, a good old song,
For dear old by-gone days!

It seems so short, since first we met,—
And yet it's four years past,—
Now, here as seniors all, we stand,
To graduate at last.

Long will the memories remain,
Of scraps and feeds and such,
And often we will long to see
Old Harry, Bill and "Dutch."

We may burn in far off Luzon,
Or freeze in Lab'rador,
But our hearts will ever linger
In our college days of yore.

So, ere we leave, for parts unknown,
No matter where we delve,
Let's sing a song, a parting song,
To dear old Nineteen Twelve!

The Willow Reprise

Not many springs will see thy leafy maze,
Of drooping branches; few the sands that meet
Beneath thy shade in future years to gaze,
On faces long forgot and tales repeat,
For those who should have guarded thee with great
And deep love may have come too late—too late.

" LONG LIVE THE WEEDS "

HOPKINS

Theodore Roethke

from *Open House* 1941

Long live the weeds that overwhelm
 My narrow vegetable realm!
 The bitter rock, the barren soil
 That force the son of man to toil;
 All things unholy, marred by curse,
 The ugly of the universe.
 The rough, the wicked, and the wild
 That keep the spirit undefiled.
 With these I match my little wit
 And earn the right to stand or sit,
 Hope, love, create, or drink and die;
 These shape the creature that is I.

REPLY TO CENSURE

Theodore Roethke

from *Open House* 1941

Repulse the staring eye,
 The hostile gaze of hate,
 And check the pedantry
 Of those inveterate
 Defamers of the good,
 They mock the deepest thought,
 Condemn the fortitude
 Whereby true work is wrought,
 Though just men are reviled
 When cravens cry them down,
 The brave keep undefiled
 A wisdom of their own,
 The bold wear toughened skin
 That keeps sufficient store
 Of dignity within,
 And quiet at the core.

LUTE SONG

Robert Lima

from *Eye of the Beholder*

Joy is in the making . . .
 of instruments that bring elation
 of music that the fingers sing
 Joy is in the leaping . . .
 through time, geography and lore
 through planes of magnitude and depth
 Joy is in the sensing . . .
 oneness with the master hand
 oneness with the inner ear

BEFORE YOU INHABIT

ANOTHER STAR

Joseph Grucci

from *The Invented Will* 1962

Man, if you should inhabit another star,
 Fell not a single tree
 That you cannot replace,
 Cultivate no acre for the ravens to destroy,
 House no one where he cannot see
 A sun-held hill beyond the greenest street.
 (But above all else
 Take nothing from a native of that star
 To make his world the less.)
 Build landing strips
 For visitors from outer space;
 Make laws, if indeed you must,
 That even the wiliest cannot twist,
 But shape them to the human need,
 Against inquisitors keep inviolable
 The privacy of mind.
 O man, before you inhabit another star,
 Let fall the rain
 Here, let it fall to stir
 The sleeping sand.

DINNER IN THE COURTYARD

Emily Grosholz

from *The River Painter* 1984

When summer tears the maple leaves
to lace, and blue shows through the green
like those imagined distances
weaving through all things close at hand,
then sunset looms for hours upon
the scarlet tenements of day,
unraveling curtains, windowpanes
ablaze. The house is close, I say,

and move the table underneath
the arches of the maple tree.
Not even the curious neighbors know
if I am host or stranger here,
nor if this roof of leaf and air,
the little courtyard to the world, is home.

POEM WITH A MOON

John Balaban

from *Blue Mountain* 1982

One summer evening at an oak edged pond,
I saw shoals of frogs, or small toads, spawning,
bloated red, glued in pairs, rolling,
roiling the shallows under a full moon
which, oiled, sleek, dripping in the trees,
cast shadows from my hand onto the water.
Tonight, spring night, by your house the peepers trill,
and the moon, as you sit at your desk, looks in
to see if your face is still shadowed by mine.

EDEN

Emily Grosholz

from *Eden* 1992

In lurid cartoon colors, the big baby
dinosaur steps backwards under the shadow
of an approaching tyrannosaurus rex,
"His mommy going to fix it," you remark,
serenely anxious, hoping for the best.

After the big explosion, after the lights
go down inside the house and up the street,
we rush outdoors to find a squirrel stopped
in straws of half-gnawed cable. I explain,
trying to fit the facts, "The squirrel is dead."

No, you explain it otherwise to me.
"He's sleeping. And his mommy going to come."
Later, when the squirrel has been removed,
"His mommy fix him," you insist, insisting
on the right to know what you believe.

The world is truly full of fabulous
great and curious small inhabitants,
and you're the freshly minted, unashamed
Adam in this garden. You preside,
appreciate, and judge our proper names.

Like God, I brought you here.
Like God, I seem to be omnipotent,
mostly helpful, sometimes angry as hell.
I fix whatever minor faults arise
with bandaids, batteries, masking tape, and pills.

But I am powerless, as you must know,
to chase the serpent sliding in the grass,
or the tall angel with the flaming sword
who scares you when he rises suddenly
behind the gates of sunset.

THE EYE IN THE FOREST

John Haag

from *The Mirrored Man* 1961

Beneath a cedar, buried in the moss
 And needles, cloistered in a dim recess
 Where only green light filters down, the doe
 Has left her tissue skull. Facets of dew
 Shine on a ring of bone about an eye
 Replaced by violets. Tentatively
 They linger, but the flower stays, and thrives,
 Hiding the death-mask under living leaves
 As roots explore and force the delicate
 Faint unions where the accurate bone was knit,
 The moss, intruding, swells between the teeth
 And plucks them slowly; day by day this death
 Becomes important as the forest dreams,
 Covers and keeps, and silently reclaims.

NIGHT JOURNEY

Theodore Roethke

from *Open House* 1941

Now as the train bears west,
 Its rhythm rocks the earth,
 And from my Pullman berth
 I stare into the night
 While others take their rest.
 Bridges of iron lace,
 A suddenness of trees,
 A lap of mountain mist
 All cross my line of sight,
 Then a bleak wasted place,
 And a lake below my knees.
 Full on my neck I feel
 The straining at a curve;
 My muscles move with steel,

I wake in every nerve.

I watch a beacon swing

From dark to blazing bright;

We thunder through ravines

And gullies washed with light.

Beyond the mountain pass

Mist deepens on the pane;

We rush into a rain

That rattles double glass.

Wheels shake the roadbed stone,

The pistons jerk and shove,

I stay up half the night

To see the land I love.

IDYLL

Theodore Roethke

from *Open House* 1941

Now as from maple to elm the flittermice skitter and twirl,

A drunk man stumbles by, absorbed in self-talk.

The lights in the kitchens go out; moth wings unfurl;

The last tricycle runs crazily to the end of the walk.

As darkness creeps up on the well-groomed suburban town,

We grow indifferent to dog howls, to the nestling's last peep;

Dew deepens on the fresh-cut lawn;

We sit in the porch swing, content and half asleep.

The world recedes in the black revolving shadow;

A far-off train blows its echoing whistle once;

We go to our beds in a house at the edge of a meadow,

Unmindful of terror and headlines, of speeches and guns.

ADAM'S PUZZLE

K a t e y L e h m a n

*If my spirit
differs from my soul,
and I concur with this conceit,
how do I deal
with my erratic spirit,
and where, thereafter,
goes my soul?*

*My spirit leaps
toward shining hair,
to sunlit butterflies, from there
to hummingbirds that hover
in the blossoms of my fragrant quince,
and then to anything that hovers
and, mid-air, turns my moods
to altered colors.*

*My soul goes pressing toward the ground,
and then goes upward, falling
to the sound of geese,
and way beyond . . .
down and up and out and all around.*

*God gave Adam a body, a spirit,
and a soul
My spirit goes with what I see.
My soul knows all the mystery.*

Note: This is the last poem

Katey wrote before her death,

January 3, 1981.

OPEN HOUSE

T h e o d o r e R o e t h k e

from *Open House* 1941

*My secrets cry aloud.
I have no need for tongue.
My heart keeps open house,
My doors are widely swung.
An epic of the eyes
My love, with no disguise.*

*My truths are all foreknown,
This anguish self-revealed.
I'm naked to the bone,
With nakedness my shield.
Myself is what I wear:
I keep the spirit spare.*

*The anger will endure,
The deed will speak the truth
In language strict and pure,
I stop the lying mouth:
Rage warps my clearest cry
To witless agony.*

LIEDER

D e b o r a h A u s t i n

from *The Paradise of the World* 1964

*Birds sing, (but not for human hearts)
lean down the wind and so are gone,
This music wells from nearer home;
we listen and are not alone—
in places where no strangers come,
familiar strolls this least of arts

that is all art, all truth, all song;
that heals by wounding us, and by*

*always dividing false from true
insists on beauty, gracefully
confirming what we really knew:
nothing not found here can last long.*

**THE CHILD OF MANY
WINTERS**

John Haag
from *The Mirrored Man* 1961

*The child of many winters came
And stared into the fountain where
The lost bells ring. Another time
She might have seen the evening star
Drinking its own reflection, or
The water curling into foam.*

*The fountain flashed on cobblestones:
Bell music in the water slid
Down to the basin; tambourines
of silver sounded where it spread
Through changing surfaces, and made
The depth uncertain. Darker tones*

*In liquid, flickering among
The lights and pebbles, startled her,
Who dabbled fingers to prolong
The ripples, while she waited for
The clearest image to appear—
And listened for the bells to ring.*

THE SUMMONS

Theodore Roethke
Phi Beta Kappa Poem 1938

*Now all who love the best,—
Old and rebellious young,—
Must contemplate the waste
Of countenancing wrong:
The human mired, the brute
Raised up to eminence,
The mimic following suit
Until devoid of sense
The good becoming gross,—
All this we may discern;
By slow degrees we learn
The full extent of loss.*

*Though the small wit we have
May nullify belief,
The simple act can save
The heritage of life,
With secrecy put by,
The heart grows less obtuse,
And fervency of eye
Is put to better use.*

*The impulse long denied,
The lips that never move,
The hatred and the pride,—
These can be turned to love,
Now we must summon all
Our force, from breadth to length,
And walk, more vertical,
Secure in human strength.*

THE FIRE ELMS

J a s o n C h a r n e s k y

*From the start of the stars
when that first garbled night
blazed out in cosmic light
all was fire, all was fire,
and the flame passed along
to the fire blossomed birth
of our fair risen earth
all afire.*

*Now the light lay well hid
within flower and beast
the most vast and the least
each a fire, each a fire,
Every ordinary tree
bears a mark from the realm
of the star. And our elms
are on fire.*

*And the elm gabled mall
where we walked in our youth
echoed passion and truth,
all on fire, all on fire.
Though we thought these dark trees
wooden-hearted and cold,
We were brave, clever, bold
and on fire.*

*Half our life now well spent,
those grand trees span the mall,
we are stooped, they are tall,
and the fire, and the fire
has passed on to the eyes
of the youth-blooming crowd
walking careless and proud
and on fire.*

*For the sons of the daughters
of the daughters of our sons
will discover in their turns
some pure fire, some pure fire,
and will strike out as if
all the world waited through
all of time for their new
urgent fire.*

*What if tree turn to dust,
or the sea overwhelm
dusty plain, and each elm
once a fire, once a fire,
should sink back to the earth?
Every birth is as swift.
Let us merit the gift—
Life, Love, Fire.*