

A Poison Tree

by William Blake

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

5 And I water'd it in fears,
 Night & morning with my tears:
 And I sunned it with smiles,
 And with soft deceitful wiles.

10 And it grew both day and night,
 Till it bore an apple bright.
 And my foe beheld it shine,
 And he knew that it was mine.

15 And into my garden stole.
 When the night had veil'd the pole;
 In the morning glad I see,
 My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.



everywhere, everywhere

by Charles Bukowski

amazing, how grimly we hold onto our
misery,
ever defensive, thwarted by
the forces.

5 amazing, the energy we burn
fueling our anger.
amazing, how one moment we can be
snarling like a beast, then
a few moments later,
10 forgetting what or
why

not hours of this or days or
months or years of this
but decades,
15 lifetimes
completely used up,
given over
to the pettiest
rancor and
20 hatred.

finally
there is nothing here for death to
take
away.



I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

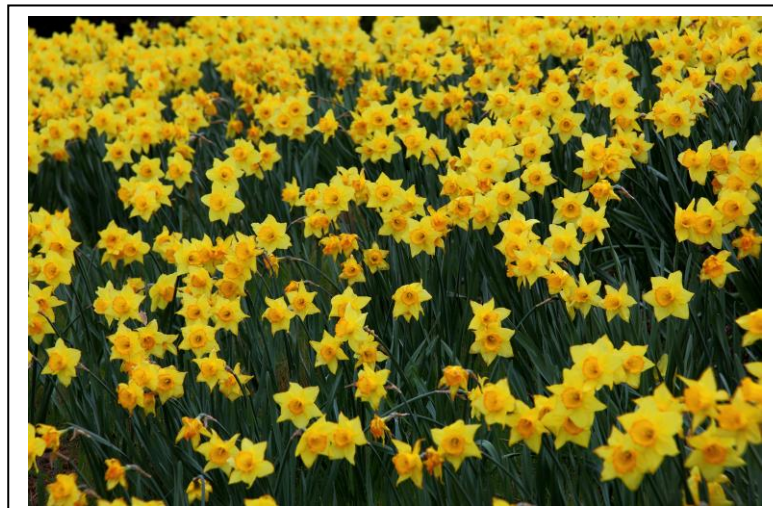
by William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
5 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
10 Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
15 A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed---and gazed---but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
20 In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.



Fight

by Laurel Blossom

That is the difference between me and you.
You pack an umbrella, #30 sun goo
And a red flannel shirt. That's not what I do.

5 I put the top down as soon as we arrive.
The temperature's trying to pass fifty-five.
I'm freezing but at least I'm alive.

Nothing on earth can diminish my glee.
This is Florida, Florida, land of euphoria,
Florida in the highest degree.

10 You dig in the garden. I swim in the pool.
I like to wear cotton. You like to wear wool.
You're always hot. I'm usually cool.

You want to get married. I want to be free.
You don't seem to mind that we disagree.
15 And that is the difference between you and me.



Ozymandias

by Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveler from an antique land,
Who said - "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert...Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
5 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
10 My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."



My Father's Love Letters

by Yusef Komunyakaa

On Fridays he'd open a can of Jax
 After coming home from the mill,
 & ask me to write a letter to my mother
 Who sent postcards of desert flowers
 5 Taller than men. He would beg,
 Promising to never beat her
 Again. Somehow I was happy
 She had gone, & sometimes wanted
 To slip in a reminder, how Mary Lou
 10 Williams' "Polka Dots & Moonbeams"
 Never made the swelling go down.
 His carpenter's apron always bulged
 With old nails, a claw hammer
 Looped at his side & extension cords
 15 Coiled around his feet.
 Words rolled from under the pressure
 Of my ballpoint: Love,
 Baby, Honey, Please.
 We sat in the quiet brutality
 20 Of voltage meters & pipe threaders,
 Lost between sentences . . .
 The gleam of a five-pound wedge
 On the concrete floor
 Pulled a sunset
 25 Through the doorway of his toolshed.
 I wondered if she laughed
 & held them over a gas burner.
 My father could only sign
 His name, but he'd look at blueprints
 30 & say how many bricks
 Formed each wall. This man,
 Who stole roses & hyacinth
 For his yard, would stand there
 With eyes closed & fists balled,
 35 Laboring over a simple word, almost
 Redeemed by what he tried to say.



The Gift

by Li-Young Lee

To pull the metal splinter from my palm
 my father recited a story in a low voice.
 I watched his lovely face and not the blade.
 Before the story ended, he'd removed
 5 the iron sliver I thought I'd die from.

I can't remember the tale,
 but hear his voice still, a well
 of dark water, a prayer.
 And I recall his hands,
 10 two measures of tenderness
 he laid against my face,
 the flames of discipline
 he raised above my head.

Had you entered that afternoon
 15 you would have thought you saw a man
 planting something in a boy's palm,
 a silver tear, a tiny flame.
 Had you followed that boy
 you would have arrived here,
 20 where I bend over my wife's right hand.

Look how I shave her thumbnail down
 so carefully she feels no pain.
 Watch as I lift the splinter out.
 I was seven when my father
 25 took my hand like this,
 and I did not hold that shard
 between my fingers and think,
Metal that will bury me,
 christen it Little Assassin,
 30 *Ore Going Deep for My Heart.*
 And I did not lift up my wound and cry,
Death visited here!
 I did what a child does
 when he's given something to keep.
 35 I kissed my father.



Dinner Out

by Christopher Howell

We went to either the Canton Grill
 or the Chinese Village, both of them
 on Eighty-second among the car lots
 and discount stores and small nests
 5 of people waiting hopelessly
 for the bus. I preferred the Canton
 for its black and bright red sign
 with the dragon leaping out of it
 and sneezing little pillows of smoke.
 10 And inside, the beautiful green
 half-shell booths, glittery brass encrusted
 lamps swinging above them.

What would I have?
 Sweet and sour?
 15 Chow mein with little wagon wheel- shaped
 slices of okra and those crinkly noodles
 my father called deep fried worms?
 Fried rice?

Among such succulence, what did it matter?
 20 We could eat 'til we were glad and full, the whole
 family sighing with the pleasure of it.
 And then the teal
 All of this for about six bucks, total,
 my father, for that once-in-a-while, feeling
 25 flush in the glow of our happy faces
 and asking me, "How you doing, son?"

Fine, Dad. Great, really, in the light of that place, almost tasting
 the salt and bean paste and molasses, nearly
 hearing the sound of the car door
 30 opening before we climbed in together
 and drove and drove,
 though we hadn't far to go.

