

# the poetry

## **Morning Opens**

*by Jennifer Higdon*

The morning opens like a flower from night  
I see the stars go to sleep in the light  
And as I walk into the morning air thinking of you  
In cracks of sidewalks I pick up flowers moist with truth

I amble on now through rainbows from sprinklers  
I cross the street and wave to neighbors and strangers  
I feel I'm floating and I'm flying, I'm the flower from the night  
Slowly opens, feels the sun's rays, from your morning light

A window opens, your face comes in sight  
I wave good morning, your face beaming bright  
I feel my day start from the sunshine in you  
The flowers open in love and morning's light dew

## **Prayer**

*by Langston Hughes*

I ask you this:  
Which way to go?  
I ask you this:  
Which sin to bear?  
Which crown to put  
Upon my hair?  
I do not know,  
Lord God,  
I do not know.

## **I know my mind and I have made my choice**

*by Edna St. Vincent Millay*

I know my mind and I have made my choice;  
Not from your temper does my doom depend;  
Love me or love me not, you have no voice  
In this, which is my portion to the end.  
Your presence and your favours, the full part  
That you could give, you now can take away:  
What lies between your beauty and my heart  
Not even you can trouble or betray.  
Mistake me not—unto my inmost core  
I do desire your kiss upon my mouth;  
They have not craved a cup of water more  
That bleach upon the deserts of the south;  
Here might you bless me; what you cannot do  
Is bow me down, who have been loved by you.

## **From The Ashes She Became**

*by Nikita Gill*

Before she became fire, she was water.  
Quenching the thirst of every dying creature.  
She gave and she gave  
until she turned from sea to desert.  
But instead of dying of the heat,  
the sadness, the heartache,  
she took all of her pain  
and from her own ashes became fire.

## **Heavenly Grass**

*by Tennessee Williams*

My feet took a walk in heavenly grass.  
All day while the sky shone clear as glass.  
My feet took a walk in heavenly grass,  
All night while the lonesome stars rolled past.  
Then my feet come down to walk on earth,  
And my mother cried when she give me birth.  
Now my feet walk far and my feet walk fast,  
But they still got an itch for heavenly grass.  
But they still got an itch for heavenly grass.

## **Open-Mouthed Gemini**

*by Morgan Ureña*

Every morning like ritual,  
I stand naked before the bathroom mirror;  
sigh like I'm breathing for the first time.  
I blink.  
My reflection doesn't.  
My moon mirror twin grins.

Fingernails first,  
they remove each tooth gently,  
hagstones on the counter.  
An azure wave pools in the sink where blood should be.  
They speak, a gumless thing,  
and a golden scarab crawls out.  
"Oh you too soft thing," they say,  
"Your chest begs to meet the knife."  
Trace your bosom with the scalpel.  
Let the butterflies come out.  
Your blood will become blue silk,  
and humanity will behold the life you lead.  
Your mother's sobs will wrack your ribcage,  
until all you hear are wind chimes.  
Have you ever been anything short of a wailing phantom?

I laugh in shock,  
and the tile beneath me shakes.  
My reflection rattles and the glass cracks,  
like my spine in the early morning.  
My naked form is spliced, quadrupled,  
and from the mirror, euphoria erupts.  
A tidal wave comes before the shower  
and I, the scarab, the ragstone, the butterflies float.

## **Seascape**

*by W. H. Auden*

Look, stranger, at this island now  
The leaping light for your delight discovers,  
Stand stable here  
And silent be,  
That through the channels of the ear

May wander like a river  
The swaying sound of the sea.

Here at the small field's ending pause  
Where the chalk wall falls to the foam, and its tall ledges  
Oppose the pluck  
And knock of the tide,  
And the shingle scrambles after the sucking surf, and the gull lodges  
A moment on its sheer side.

Far off like floating seeds the ships  
Diverge on urgent voluntary errands;  
And the full view  
Indeed may enter  
And move in memory as now these clouds do,  
That pass the harbour mirror  
And all the summer through the water saunter.

by Robert Creeley

Lift me into heaven slowly,  
cause my back's sore  
and my mind's thoughtful  
and I'm not even sure  
I want to go.

## **Silhouette**

*by Leonard Bernstein, after a Lebanese folksong*

A last little bird on a palm feather riding,  
Black and clean in the afterglow.  
A lone little girl in the olive grove hiding,  
Crooning soft as the sun sinks low: oo, oo,  
Hu! 'rrfah!  
An old little jeep through the mountains crawling,  
Tough and tiny against the sun,  
A young Arab shepherd upon his knees falling,  
Allah, Allah, the day is done, ee,ee, ee,  
Hee! 'rrfah!  
The boys in the dark olive groves assemble,  
Hand in hand in a dancing ring,  
Their eyes to the sun, and their lips atremble,  
Drunk with love and the chant they sing:  
Walad ela 'Una, Norkod taht el zetuna!  
Ah! Ha! 'rrfah

## **At a Dinner Party**

*by Amy Levy*

With fruit and flowers the board is decked,  
The wine and laughter flow;  
I'll not complain—could one expect  
So dull a world to know?

You look across the fruit and flowers,  
My glance your glances find.—  
It is our secret, only ours,  
Since all the world is blind.

## **Snake**

By Philip Littel

Snake, is it true  
About the fruit?  
My intuition tells me what you say about the fruit is true.  
I'd like to find out, snake.  
I'd love to know.  
Go ahead in front of me  
Where I can see you.  
I will follow you.  
Oh!  
The snake is in the tree.  
Where I cannot see him  
He is not the color of Shadows.  
Very few things are  
As visible as I am When I'm clean.  
When a thing is visible,  
It always means that the thing,  
The tree from, or that fruit,  
Means to be seen. Visibility's  
A warning  
or  
An invitation  
And it never tells you  
Which.  
What's visible will either  
Feed you,  
Mate with you,  
Or kill you.  
Either way you gain

Experience.  
Here goes.  
Sweet.  
Sour.  
Salty.  
Bitter.  
And the taste of air,  
Of rottenness,  
Earth,  
And water.  
Now I know.

## **Will there really be a morning?**

*by Emily Dickinson*

Will there really be a "Morning"?  
Is there such a thing as "Day"?  
Could I see it from the mountains  
If I were as tall as they?  
Has it feet like Water lilies?  
Has it feathers like a Bird?  
Is it brought from famous countries  
Of which I have never heard?  
Oh some Scholar! Oh some Sailor!  
Oh some Wise Men from the skies!  
Please to tell a little Pilgrim  
Where the place called "Morning" lies!

## **Solitaire**

*by Amy Lowell*

When night drifts along the streets of the city,  
And sifts down between the uneven roofs,  
My mind begins to peek and peer.  
It plays at ball in odd, blue Chinese gardens,  
And shakes wrought dice-cups in Pagan temples  
Amid the broken flutings of white pillars.  
It dances with purple and yellow crocuses in its hair,  
And its feet shine as they flutter over drenched grasses.  
How light and laughing my mind is,  
When all the good folk have put out their bedroom candles,  
And the city is still.