

A Collection of Quotes, Aphorisms and Poetry Needing Interpretation to Illuminate Things in Life

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Anything that has real and lasting value is always a gift from within

--- Kafka

The best use of a life is to spend it for something that will outlast it

--William James

Awakened

In advanced age, my health worsening, I woke up in the middle of the night, and experienced a feeling of happiness so intense and perfect that in all my life I had only felt its premonition. And there was no reason for it. It didn't obliterate consciousness; the past which I carried was there, together with my grief. And it was suddenly included, was a necessary part of the whole. As if a voice were repeating: "You can stop worrying now; everything happened just as it had to. You did what was assigned to you, and you are not required anymore to think of what happened long ago." The peace I felt was a closing of accounts and was connected with the thought of death. The happiness on this side was like an announcement of the other side. I realized that this was an undeserved gift and I could not grasp by what grace it was bestowed on me.

-- Czeslaw Milosz ,Poet, winner of the 1980 Nobel Prize for Literature

Strange is our situation here on earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that people are here for the sake of other people, for the countless souls with whose faith we are connected by a bond of sympathy. Many times a day I realize how my own inner and outer life is built upon the labors of others, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return, as much as I have received, and am still receiving.

-- Albert Einstein

The individual succumbs, but he does not die if he has left something for mankind.

-- Will Durant

The best use of a life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.

-- William James

Everyone whose deeds are more than his wisdom, his wisdom endures. And whose wisdom is more than his deeds, his wisdom does not endure.

-- The Talmud

People like you and I, though mortal of course like everyone else, do not grow old no matter how long we live... We never cease to stand like curious children before the great mystery into which we were born.

-- Albert Einstein

Trust only movement. Life happens at the level of events, not of words. Trust movement.

--Alfred Adler

Real life is to most men, a long second best, a perpetual compromise between the ideal and the possible.

--Bertrand Russell

This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap.

--George Bernard Shaw

Too much happens.... Man performs, engenders so much more than he can or should have to bear. That's how he finds that he can bear anything.

-- William Faulkner

Cruelty can arise from the aesthetic outrage we sometimes feel in the presence of strange individuals who seem to be making out alright... Have they found some secret passage to eternal life? It can't be. If those weird individuals with beards and funny hats are acceptable, then what about my claim to superiority? Can someone like that be my equal in God's eyes? Does he, that one, dare hope to live forever too—and perhaps crowd me out? I don't like it. All I know is, if he's right I'm wrong. So different and funny looking. I think he's trying to fool the Gods with his sly ways. Let's show him up. He's not very strong. For a start, see what he'll do when I poke him.

--Alan Harrington

Ralph Sumner died the other day, full of years (eighty plus) and wisdom (dairy farmer, cabinetmaker, churchgoer, member of the local road crew, dowser). When we laid him in the ground there were some tears, but there was a lot of gratitude for the joy he had spread around the folk of Heath, MA 01346. Ralph's death made me think about my life. I believe we are placed here to be companions—a wonderful word that comes from *cum panis* (with bread). We are here to share bread with one another so that everyone has enough, no one has too much and our social order achieves this goal with maximal freedom and minimal coercion. There are many names for such sharing: utopia, the beloved community, the Kingdom of God, the communion of saints. And while the goal is too vast to be realized solely on this planet, it is still our task to create foretastes of it on this planet—living glimpses of what life is meant to be, which include art and music and poetry and shared laughter and picnics and politics and moral outrage and special privileges for children only and wonder and humor and endless love to counterbalance the otherwise immobilizing realities of tyrants, starving children, death camps and just plain greed. But I expect Ralph Sumner now sees it more clearly than I do.

--Robert McAfee, Presbyterian Minister and Educator
Professor of Theology and Ethics

Mankind's common instinct for reality...has always held the world to be essentially a theatre for heroism.

-- William James

We like to be reminded that our central calling, our main task on this planet, is the heroic.

-- Ernest Becker

... the truly basic things about man, the things that really drive him....man's creatureliness (his appetite) on the one hand, and his ingenuity on the other

-- Ernest Becker

The unconscious does not know death or time in man's physiochemical, inner organic recesses he feels immortal.

-- Sigmund Freud

A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is brave five minutes longer.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

Hero worship is strongest where there is least regard for human freedom.

--Herbert Spencer

This is mankind's age-old dilemma in the face of death: what man really fears is not so much extinction, but extinction with insignificance. Man wants to know that his life has somehow counted, that it has left a trace, a trace that has meaning. And in order for anything once alive to have meaning, its effects must remain alive in eternity in some way.

-- Ernest Becker

Whoever wants to know the hearts and minds of America had better learn baseball.

-- Jacques Barzan

There is nothing sacred about convention; there is nothing sacred about primitive passions or whims; but the fact that a convention exists indicates that a way of living has been devised capable of maintaining itself.

-- George Santayana

All religions must be tolerated, for every man must get to heaven in his own way.

--Frederick the Great

Religion is a great force—the only real motive force in the world, but you must get at a man through his own religion, not through yours.

--George Bernard Shaw

When a man is freed of religion, he has a better chance to live a normal and wholesome life.

--Sigmund Freud

Few people can be happy unless they hate some other person, nation or creed.

-- Bertrand Russell

We are born helpless. As soon as we are fully conscious we discover loneliness. We need others physically, emotionally and intellectually; we need them if we are to know anything, even ourselves.

-- C.S. Lewis

The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like, and do what you'd rather not.

-- Mark Twain

Life is a tragedy for those who feel, and a comedy for those who think.

-- Jean De La Bruyer

Men are wise in proportion, not to their experience, but to their capacity for experience.

-- George Bernard Shaw

Honesty is the policy when there is money in it.

-- Mark Twain

I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.

-- Mark Twain

Education is the progressive discovery of our ignorance.

-- Will Durant

I am always ready to learn, but I do not always like being taught.

-- Winston Churchill

I am the inferior of any man whose rights I trample under foot. Men are not superior by reasons of the accidents of race and color. They are superior who have the best heart—the best brain. The superior man....stands erect by bending over the fallen. He rises by lifting others.

-- Robert Green Ingersoll

Anyone who cannot come to terms with his life while he is alive needs one hand to ward off a little his despair over his fate... but with his other hand he can note down what he sees among the ruins.

-- Franz Kafka

Life is a tragedy for those who feel and a comedy for those who think.

-- Jean De La Bruyere

When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty one, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.

-- Mark Twain

The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true art and true science.

-- Albert Einstein

Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.

-- Franz Kafka

A man never discloses his own character so clearly as when he describes another's.

-- Jean Paul Richter

By believing passionately in something that still does not exist, we create it. The nonexistent is whatever we have not sufficiently desired.

-- Franz Kafka

A thousand words will not leave so deep an impression as one deed.

-- Henrik Ibsen

In the fight between you and the world, back the world.

-- Franz Kafka

In theory there is a possibility of perfect happiness: To believe in the indestructible element within one, and not to strive towards it.

-- Franz Kafka

Life's splendor forever lies in wait about each one of us in all its fullness, but veiled from view, deep down, invisible, far off. It is there, though, not hostile, not reluctant, not deaf. If you summon it by the right word, by its right name, it will come.

-- Franz Kafka

...the fact that the fear of death is indeed a universal in the human condition.

-- Ernest Becker

My guiding principle is this: Guilt is never to be doubted.

-- Franz Kafka

Society almost everywhere provides codes for such self-aggrandizement, for the ability to boast, to humiliate, or just simply to outshine in quiet ways—like displaying one's superior achievements. If Hocart says that man cannot impart life to himself but must get it via ritual from his fellow man, then we can say even further that man cannot impart importance to himself; and importance, we now see, is just as deep a problem in securing life; importance equals durability equals life.

-- Ernest Becker

Start with what is right rather than what is acceptable.

-- Franz Kafka

Is there any meaning in my life that the inevitable death awaiting me does not destroy?

-- Leo Tolstoy

All our knowledge merely helps us to die a more painful death than the animals who know nothing.

-- Maurice Maeterlinck

History is what man does with death.

-- Georg Hegel

Man cannot live without a continuous confidence in something indestructible within himself.

-- Franz Kafka

Nothing is more seductive for man than his freedom of conscience. But nothing is a greater cause of suffering.

-- Fyodor Dostoyevsky

We are sinful not merely because we have eaten of the tree of knowledge, but also because we have not eaten of the tree of life.

-- Franz Kafka

You can hold yourself back from the sufferings of the world, that is something you are free to do and it accords with your nature, but perhaps this very holding back is the one suffering you could avoid.

-- Franz Kafka

Anything that has real and lasting value is always a gift from within.

-- Franz Kafka

The irony of man's condition is that the deepest need is to be free of the anxiety of death and annihilation; but it is life itself which awakens it, and so we must shrink from being fully alive.

-- Roy Waldman

And what, then, would be the highest development and use of those talents? To contribute to the struggle against evil, of course. In other words, man is fated, as William James saw, to consider this earth as a theater for heroism, and his life as a vehicle for heroic acts which aim precisely to transcend evil. Each person wants to have his life make a difference in the life of mankind, contribute in some way toward securing and furthering that life, make it in some ways less vulnerable, more durable. To be a true hero is to triumph over disease, want, death. One knows that life has had vital human meaning if it has been able to bring real benefits to the life of mankind. And so men have always honored their heroes, especially in religion, medicine, science, diplomacy and war (*Escape From Evil*, p. 149)

--- Ernest Becker

Act one of a young man's life is the story of his setting out to conquer the world. Act two is the story of a young man realizing that the world is not about to be conquered by the likes of him.

-- Carl Jung

When I was young I admired clever people. As I grew old I came to admire kind people.

-- Abraham Joshua Heschel

Turning Point ---Rilke

For a long time he attained it in looking,
Stars would fall to their knees
Beneath his compelling vision.
Or as he looked on, kneeling,
His urgency's fragrance
Tired out a god until
It smiled at him in its sleep.

Towers he would gaze at so
That they were terrified:
Building them up again, suddenly, in an instant.
But how often the landscape,
Overburdened by day,
Came to rest in his silent awareness, ay nightfall.
Animals trusted him, stepped
Into his open look, grazing. And the imprisoned lions
Stared in as if into an incomprehensible freedom,
Birds. As it felt them, flew headlong
Through it, and flowers, as enormous
As they are to children, gazed back
Into it, on and on.

And the rumor that there was someone
Who knew how to look,
Stirred those less
visible creatures
stirred the women

Looking how long?
For how long now, deeply deprived, Beseeching in the depths

How old would you be if you didn't know how old you are?

--Satchell Paige

If you won't be better tomorrow than you were today, then what do you need tomorrow for?

--Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav

The good life, as I conceive it, is a happy life. I do not mean that if you are good you will be happy—I mean that if you are happy you will be good.

--Bertrand Russell

You see things and say "Why" But I dream things that never were and say Why Not?

--George Bernard Shaw

You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give.

--Winston Churchill

If one could recover the uncompromising spirit of one's youth, one's greatest indignation would be for what one has become.

--Andre Gide

After all is said and done, more is said than done.

--Italian proverb

The biggest temptation is ... to settle for too little.

--Thomas Merton

For the unlearned, old age is winter; for the learned, it is the season of the harvest.

--Hasidic Saying

The fateful question for the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent their cultural development will succeed in mastering the disturbance of their communal life by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction. It may be that in this respect precisely the present time deserves a special interest. Men have gained control over the forces of nature to such an extent that with their help they would have no difficulty in exterminating one another to the last man. They know this, and hence comes a large part of their current unrest, their unhappiness and their mood of anxiety. (Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, p. 92)

--- Sigmund Freud

Have you ever heard of the madman who on a bright morning lighted a lantern and ran to the market-place calling out unceasingly: "I seek God! I seek God!" As there were many people standing about who did not believe in God, he caused a great deal of amusement... The insane man jumped into their midst and transfixed them with his glances. "where is God gone?" he called out. "I mean to tell you! We have killed him---you and I! We are all his murderers! But how have we done it? How were we able to drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the whole horizon? What did we do when we loosened this earth from the sun? Whither does it now move? Whither do we move?... Is there still an above and below? Do we not stray, as through infinite nothingness? Does not empty space breathe upon us/ ... God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him! How shall we console ourselves, the most murderous of all murderers? The holiest and the mightiest that the world has hitherto possessed, has bled to death under our knife—who will wipe the blood from us?...There was never a greater event—and on account of it, all who are born after us belong to a higher history than any history hitherto!" (The Joyful Wisdom, p.167)

--- Friedrich Nietzsche

Artificer

Czeslaw Milosz

Burning, he walks in the stream of flickering letters, clarinets,
machines throbbing quicker than the heart, lopped-off heads, silk
canvases, and he stops under the sky
and raises toward it his joined clenched fists.

Believers fall on their bellies, they suppose it is a monstrosity that
shines, but those are knuckles, sharp knuckles shine that way, my friends.
He cuts the glowing, yellow buildings in two, breaks the walls into
motley halves; pensive, he looks at the honey seeping from those huge honeycombs:
throbs of pianos, children's cries, the thud of a head banging against
the floor.

This is the only landscape able to make him feel.
He wonders at his brother's skull shaped like an egg,
every day he shoves back his black hair from his brow,
then one day he plants a big load of dynamite
and is surprised that afterward everything spouts up in the explosion.
Agape, he observes the clouds and what is hanging in them:
globes, penal codes, dead cats floating on their backs, locomotives.
They turn in the skeins of white clouds like trash in a puddle.
While below on the earth a banner, the color of a romantic rose,
flutters, and a long row of military trains crawls on the weed-covered tracks.

So Little

by Milosz

I said so little. Days were short. Short days. Short nights. Short years. I said so little. I couldn't keep up. My heart grew weary From joy, Despair, Ardor, Hope. The jaws of Leviathan Were closing upon me. Naked, I lay on the shores Of desert islands. The white whale of the world Hauled me down to its pit. And now I don't know What in all that was real.

Berkeley, 1969

A Song On the End of the World

by Czeslaw Milosz

Translated by Anthony Milosz

On the day the world ends A bee circles a clover, A fisherman mends a glimmering net. Happy porpoises jump in the sea, By the rainspout young sparrows are playing And the snake is gold-skinned as it should always be.

On the day the world ends Women walk through the fields under their umbrellas, A drunkard grows sleepy at the edge of a lawn, Vegetable peddlers shout in the street And a yellow-sailed boat comes nearer the island, The voice of a violin lasts in the air And leads into a starry night.

And those who expected lightning and thunder Are disappointed. And those who expected signs and archangels' trumps Do not believe it is happening now. As long as the sun and the moon are above, As long as the bumblebee visits a rose, As long as rosy infants are born No one believes it is happening now.

Only a white-haired old man, who would be a prophet Yet is not a prophet, for he's much too busy, Repeats while he binds his tomatoes: No other end of the world will there be, No other end of the world will there be.

Once

Philip Levine

Hungry and cold, I stood in a doorway
on Delancey Street in 1946
as the rain came down. The worst part is this
is not from a bad movie. I'd read Dos Passos'
USA and thought, "Before the night ends
my life will change." A stranger would stop
to ask for my help, a single stranger
more needy than I, if such a woman
were possible. I still had cigarettes,
damp matches, and an inaccurate map
of Manhattan in my head, and the change
from the one \$20 traveler's check
I'd cashed in a dairy restaurant where
the amazed owner actually proclaimed
to the busy heads, "They got Jews in Detroit!"

You can forgive the night. No one else was dumb
enough to be out. Sure, it was Easter.
Was I expecting crocus and lilac
to burst from the pavement and sweeten
the air the way they did in Michigan once
upon a time? This wouldn't be so bad
if you were only young once. Once would be fine.
You stand out in the rain once and get wet
expecting to enter fiction. You huddle
under the Williamsburg Bridge posing for Life.

You trek to the Owl Hotel to lie awake
in a room the size of a cat box and smell
the dawn as it leaks under the shade
with the damp welcome you deserve. Just the once
you earn your doctorate in mismanagement.

So I was eighteen, once, fifty years ago,
a kid from a small town with big ideas.
Gatsby said if Detroit is your idea
of a small town you need another idea,
and I needed several. I retied my shoes, washed
my face, brushed my teeth with a furry tongue,
counted out my \$11.80
on the broken bed, and decided the time
had come to mature. How else can I explain
voting for Adlai Stevenson once and once
again, planting a lemon tree in hard pan,
loaning my Charlie Parker 78s
to an out-of-work actor, eating pork loin
barbecued on Passover, tangoing
perfectly without music even with you?

Who Am I? Carl Sandburg

My head knocks against the stars. My feet are on the hilltops.
My finger-tips are in the valleys and shores of universal life.
Down in the sounding foam of primal things I reach my hands and play with pebbles of destiny.
I have been to hell and back many times. I know all about heaven, for I have talked with God.
I dabble in the blood and guts of the terrible. I know the passionate seizure of beauty
And the marvelous rebellion of man at all signs reading "Keep Off."
My name is Truth and I am the most elusive captive in the universe.

The Junk Man

Carl Sandburg

I AM glad God saw Death
And gave Death a job taking care of all who are tired of living:
When all the wheels in a clock are worn and slow and the connections loose
And the clock goes on ticking and telling the wrong time from hour to hour
And people around the house joke about what a bum clock it is,
How glad the clock is when the big Junk Man drives his wagon
Up to the house and puts his arms around the clock and says:
"You don't belong here, You gotta come along with me,"
How glad the clock is then, when it feels the arms of the
Junk Man close around it and carry it away.

Happiness

Carl Sandburg

I ASKED the professors who teach the meaning of life to tell me what is happiness.
And I went to famous executives who boss the work of thousands of men.
They all shook their heads and gave me a smile as though I was trying to fool with them
And then one Sunday afternoon I wandered out along the Desplaines river And I saw a crowd of Hungarians
under the trees with their women and children and a keg of beer and an accordion.

Ice Handler

Carl Sandburg

I know an ice handler who wears a flannel shirt with pearl buttons the size of a dollar,
And he lugs a hundred-pound hunk into a saloon ice-box, helps himself to cold ham and rye bread, Tells the
bartender it's hotter than yesterday and will be hotter yet to-morrow, by Jesus,
And is on his way with his head in the air and a hard pair of fists. He spends a dollar or so every Saturday
night on a two hundred pound woman who washes dishes in the Hotel Morrison.
He remembers when the union was organized he broke the noses of two scabs and loosened the nuts so the
wheels came off six different wagons one morning, and he came around and watched the ice melt in the
street. All he was sorry for was one of the scabs bit him on the knuckles of the right hand so they bled when
he came around to the saloon to tell the boys about it.

Coming Close

by Philip Levine

Take this quiet woman, she has been standing before a polishing wheel for over three hours, and she lacks twenty minutes before she can take a lunch break. Is she a woman? Consider the arms as they press the long brass tube against the buffer, they are striated along the triceps, the three heads of which clearly show. Consider the fine dusting of dark down above the upper lip, and the beads of sweat that run from under the red kerchief across the brow and are wiped away with a blackening wrist band in one odd motion a child might make to say No! No! You must come closer to find out, you must hang your tie and jacket in one of the lockers in favor of a black smock, you must be prepared to spend shift after shift hauling off the metal trays of stock, bowing first, knees bent for a purchase, then lifting with a gasp, the first word of tenderness between the two of you, then you must bring new trays of dull unpolished tubes. You must feed her, as they say in the language of the place. Make no mistake, the place has a language, and if by some luck the power were cut, the wheel slowed to a stop so that you suddenly saw it was not a solid object but so many separate bristles forming in motion a perfect circle, she would turn to you and say, "Why?" Not the old why of why must I spend five nights a week? Just, "Why?" Even if by some magic you knew, you wouldn't dare speak for fear of her laughter, which now you have anyway as she places the five tapering fingers of her filthy hand on the arm of your white shirt to mark you for your own, now and forever.

Nothing But Death

by Pablo Neruda

Translated by Robert Bly

There are cemeteries that are lonely,
graves full of bones that do not make a sound,
the heart moving through a tunnel,
in it darkness, darkness, darkness,
like a shipwreck we die going into ourselves,
as though we were drowning inside our hearts,
as though we lived falling out of the skin into the soul.

And there are corpses,
feet made of cold and sticky clay,
death is inside the bones,
like a barking where there are no dogs,
coming out from bells somewhere, from graves somewhere,
growing in the damp air like tears of rain.

Sometimes I see alone
coffins under sail,
embarking with the pale dead, with women that have dead hair,
with bakers who are as white as angels,
and pensive young girls married to notary publics,
caskets sailing up the vertical river of the dead,
the river of dark purple,
moving upstream with sails filled out by the sound of death,
filled by the sound of death which is silence.

Death arrives among all that sound
like a shoe with no foot in it, like a suit with no man in it,
comes and knocks, using a ring with no stone in it, with no
finger in it,
comes and shouts with no mouth, with no tongue, with no
throat.

Nevertheless its steps can be heard
and its clothing makes a hushed sound, like a tree.
I'm not sure, I understand only a little, I can hardly see,
but it seems to me that its singing has the color of damp violets,
of violets that are at home in the earth,
because the face of death is green,

and the look death gives is green,
with the penetrating dampness of a violet leaf
and the somber color of embittered winter.

But death also goes through the world dressed as a broom,
lapping the floor, looking for dead bodies,
death is inside the broom,
the broom is the tongue of death looking for corpses,

it is the needle of death looking for thread.

Death is inside the folding cots:
it spends its life sleeping on the slow mattresses,
in the black blankets, and suddenly breathes out:
it blows out a mournful sound that swells the sheets,
and the beds go sailing toward a port
where death is waiting, dressed like an admiral.

Dreams

Langston Hughes

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird

That cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

Remember, the greatest gift is not found in a store nor under a tree, but in the hearts of true friends.

-- Cindy Lew

Who finds a faithful friend, finds a treasure.

-- Jewish Saying

Meaning

Czeslaw Milosz

When I die, I will see the lining of the world.
The other side, beyond bird, mountain, sunset.
The true meaning, ready to be decoded.
What never added up will add Up,
What was incomprehensible will be comprehended.
- And if there is no lining to the world?
If a thrush on a branch is not a sign,
But just a thrush on the branch? If night and day
Make no sense following each other?
And on this earth there is nothing except this earth?
- Even if that is so, there will remain
A word wakened by lips that perish,
A tireless messenger who runs and runs
Through interstellar fields, through the revolving galaxies,
And calls out, protests, screams.

What Does It Mean

Czeslaw Milosz

It does not know it glitters
It does not know it flies
It does not know it is this not that.

And, more and more often, agape,
With my Gauloise dying out,
Over a glass of red wine,
I muse on the meaning of being this not that.

Just as long ago, when I was twenty,
But then there was a hope I would be everything,
Perhaps even a butterfly or a thrush, by magic.
Now I see dusty district roads
And a town where the postmaster gets drunk every day
Melancholy with remaining identical to himself.

If only the stars contained me.
If only everything kept happening in such a way
That the so-called world opposed the so-called flesh.

Were I at least not contradictory. Alas
The Moment

Margaret Atwood

The moment when, after many years
of hard work and a long voyage
you stand in the centre of your room,
house, half-acre, square mile, island, country,
knowing at last how you got there,
and say, I own this,

is the same moment when the trees unloose
their soft arms from around you,
the birds take back their language,
the cliffs fissure and collapse,
the air moves back from you like a wave
and you can't breathe.

No, they whisper. You own nothing.
You were a visitor, time after time
climbing the hill, planting the flag, proclaiming.
We never belonged to you.
You never found us.
It was always the other way round.

The Road Not Taken -- Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I marked the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night

Dylan Thomas

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,

Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on that sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Dream Deferred

Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore--
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over--
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

