*That Time of Year* by William Shakespeare

That time of year thou mayst in me behold

When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang

Upon these boughs which shake against the cold,

Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

In me thou see’st the twilight of such day

As after sunset fadeth in the west,

Which by and by black night doth take away,

Death’s second self, that seals up all in rest.

In me thou see’st the glowing of such fire,

That on the ashes of his youth doth lie

As the deathbed whereon it must expire,

Consumed with that which it was nourished by.

         This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,

         To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

*A Decade by Amy Lowell*

When you came, you were like red wine and honey,

And the taste of you burnt my mouth with its sweetness.

Now you are like morning bread,

Smooth and pleasant.

I hardly taste you at all for I know your savour,

But I am completely nourished.

***Buffalo Bill’s*** by e.e. cummings

Buffalo Bill ’s

defunct

               who used to

               ride a watersmooth-silver

                                                                  stallion

and break onetwothreefourfive pigeonsjustlikethat

                                                                                                     Jesus

he was a handsome man

                                                  and what i want to know is

how do you like your blue-eyed boy

Mister Death?

# *The Silken Tent* - by Robert Frost

She is as in a field a silken tent
At midday when the sunny summer breeze
Has dried the dew and all its ropes relent,
So that in guys it gently sways at ease,
And its supporting central cedar pole,
That is its pinnacle to heavenward
And signifies the sureness of the soul,
Seems to owe naught to any single cord,
But strictly held by none, is loosely bound
By countless silken ties of love and thought
To every thing on earth the compass round,
And only by one's going slightly taut
In the capriciousness of summer air
Is of the slightlest bondage made aware.

# *The Wood-Pile*

by Robert Frost

Out walking in the frozen swamp one gray day,

I paused and said, 'I will turn back from here.

No, I will go on farther—and we shall see.'

The hard snow held me, save where now and then

One foot went through. The view was all in lines

Straight up and down of tall slim trees

Too much alike to mark or name a place by

So as to say for certain I was here

Or somewhere else: I was just far from home.

A small bird flew before me. He was careful

To put a tree between us when he lighted,

And say no word to tell me who he was

Who was so foolish as to think what he thought.

He thought that I was after him for a feather—

The white one in his tail; like one who takes

Everything said as personal to himself.

One flight out sideways would have undeceived him.

And then there was a pile of wood for which

I forgot him and let his little fear

Carry him off the way I might have gone,

Without so much as wishing him good-night.

He went behind it to make his last stand.

It was a cord of maple, cut and split

And piled—and measured, four by four by eight.

And not another like it could I see.

No runner tracks in this year's snow looped near it.

And it was older sure than this year's cutting,

Or even last year's or the year's before.

The wood was gray and the bark warping off it

And the pile somewhat sunken. Clematis

Had wound strings round and round it like a bundle.

What held it though on one side was a tree

Still growing, and on one a stake and prop,

These latter about to fall. I thought that only

Someone who lived in turning to fresh tasks

Could so forget his handiwork on which

He spent himself, the labor of his ax,

And leave it there far from a useful fireplace

To warm the frozen swamp as best it could

With the slow smokeless burning of decay.

# *The Road Not Taken*

By 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, as 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 kept 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.

# *The Farmer's Wife* by Anne Sexton

From the hodge porridge
of their country lust,
their local life in Illinois,
where all their acres look
like a sprouting broom factory,
they name just en years now
that she has been his habit;
as again tonight he'll say
honey bunch let's go
and she will not say how there
must be more to living
than this brief bright bridge
of the raucous bed or even
the slow braille touch of him
like a heavy god grown light,
that old pantomime of love
that she wants although
it leaves her still alone,
built back again at last,
mind's apart from him, living
her own self in her own words
and hating the sweat of the house
they keep when they finally lie
each in separate dreams
and then how she watches him,
still strong in the blowzy bag
of his usual sleep while
her young years bungle past
their same marriage bed
and she wishes him cripple, or poet,
or even lonely, or sometimes,
better, my lover, dead.

# *Two Look At Two* - Poem by Robert Frost

Love and forgetting might have carried them
A little further up the mountain side
With night so near, but not much further up.
They must have halted soon in any case
With thoughts of a path back, how rough it was
With rock and washout, and unsafe in darkness;
When they were halted by a tumbled wall
With barbed-wire binding. They stood facing this,
Spending what onward impulse they still had
In One last look the way they must not go,
On up the failing path, where, if a stone
Or earthslide moved at night, it moved itself;
No footstep moved it. 'This is all,' they sighed,
Good-night to woods.' But not so; there was more.
A doe from round a spruce stood looking at them
Across the wall, as near the wall as they.
She saw them in their field, they her in hers.
The difficulty of seeing what stood still,
Like some up-ended boulder split in two,
Was in her clouded eyes; they saw no fear there.
She seemed to think that two thus they were safe.
Then, as if they were something that, though strange,
She could not trouble her mind with too long,
She sighed and passed unscared along the wall.
'This, then, is all. What more is there to ask?'
But no, not yet. A snort to bid them wait.
A buck from round the spruce stood looking at them
Across the wall as near the wall as they.
This was an antlered buck of lusty nostril,
Not the same doe come back into her place.
He viewed them quizzically with jerks of head,
As if to ask, 'Why don't you make some motion?
Or give some sign of life? Because you can't.
I doubt if you're as living as you look."
Thus till he had them almost feeling dared
To stretch a proffering hand -- and a spell-breaking.
Then he too passed unscared along the wall.
Two had seen two, whichever side you spoke from.
'This must be all.' It was all. Still they stood,
A great wave from it going over them,
As if the earth in one unlooked-for favour
Had made them certain earth returned their love.

# *The Man He Killed*—by Thomas Hardy

"Had he and I but met

            By some old ancient inn,

We should have sat us down to wet

            Right many a nipperkin!

            "But ranged as infantry,

            And staring face to face,

I shot at him as he at me,

            And killed him in his place.

            "I shot him dead because —

            Because he was my foe,

Just so: my foe of course he was;

            That's clear enough; although

            "He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,

            Off-hand like — just as I —

Was out of work — had sold his traps —

            No other reason why.

            "Yes; quaint and curious war is!

            You shoot a fellow down

You'd treat if met where any bar is,

            Or help to half-a-crown."