

Poetry Series

**Hm. Nes**  
**- poems -**

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## Hm. Nes(April 11,1960)

One wife.

Five kids.

Two dogs.

One cat.

Two birch trees.

Three favorites: coffee, chocolate, chess.

# A Boy Needs His Mommy

Today I needed my mommy,  
But she was not to be found.  
I cried for her, but she didn't come,  
So, I tried to not make a sound.

Quiet didn't work, so I screamed,  
Louder than ever before,  
Then I screamed again to be sure  
And sprawled myself on the floor.

She still didn't come, but in time  
A man happened by and inquired:  
What makes today such an awful day?  
I told him, although I felt tired:

My best friend moved away, I said.  
And today I woke feeling sick.  
The car needs washed AND the lawn mowed;  
Although, as I said, I'm sick.

The man agreed: It's an awful day,  
A day that a boy needs his mom.  
Although, he said, you look fifty-years-old;  
And he said it with certain aplomb.

Hm. Nes

# A Father's Love

It's a father's loyal love,  
Or could it be the lack thereof  
That drives his kid to school,  
Drives him hard as would a mule,  
Beats him up with many a rule,  
Treats him like a brainless fool?  
It's a father's loyal love,  
Or could it be the lack thereof?

Hm. Nes

# A Little Boy

A little boy with eager eyes  
And eager hands to try his aim,  
His strength as well with brand-new sling-  
The boy was me.

A mockingbird fell dead that day,  
Not to the ground, but limply hung  
From a limb in the neighbor's tree.  
The little boy cried as he climbed  
Up to the silent mockingbird.  
The boy was me.

A grave he dug under the shrub.  
A prayer he prayed with solemn vows,  
Through tears, to never kill again.  
The prayer was mine, the promise mine.  
The boy was me.

A Daisy BB gun replaced  
The slingshot, then a 20-gauge.  
Sparrows, dove, pheasant lay in piles,  
Rabbits, squirrel, deer, but no tears.  
No more promises, no more prayers.  
The boy had grown to be a man.  
The man is me.

Hm. Nes

# A Pebble Rolled

A pebble rolled,  
Rolled along the path,  
Inadvertently kicked from its rest  
By my shuffling by

My steps I slowed,  
Slowed to watch the stone,  
Familiar to me now in its search  
For a new place to lie

I left the road,  
The road of design,  
Intentionally, just to kick the rock  
Once more and watch it fly

Hm. Nes

# A Pretty Lady With A Mysterious Trunk

Where do you come from, pretty lady?  
And can it be true that you desire a favor of me?  
Your request seems simple enough,  
Innocent enough, and doable  
You want me to take your key and unlock the huge trunk  
Strapped atop your saddle pony?  
I can't remember the last time I saw a lady such as you  
As pretty as you  
Or as kind  
And traveling with a saddle pony  
Actually, in truth, this is the first time  
And the trunk, a heavy one, or so it appears  
Bends your pony to the brink of collapse  
And you such a lovely lady  
So lovely and so kind  
Yes, yes, of course, the key  
And yes, I'll open the trunk for you  
After all, a lady as delicate as yourself,  
So gentle and so kind, should not be expected  
To open such a heavy trunk  
My, just look at this trunk, so old and weathered  
Is it magical? I ask  
Turning to look at you, hoping for a response and remembering  
That your beauty is quite satisfying  
I want more of it, your beauty that is  
Especially, since it will likely be lost to me as soon as  
The task is completed and  
The trunk has been opened  
I hesitate. What is in the trunk? I ask  
Is it safe?  
I again wonder why you don't open it yourself  
Neither the lock nor the key is rusted. They are  
Easy enough to get at, and I am certain the lock will  
Open with little effort.  
Excuse me, ma'am, I say. (And I'm surprised  
By the timidity in my voice. You are not, after all,  
My superior or in any way imposing, but I feel myself weak  
In your presence and inclined to submit. I also feel  
A caution welling up from my soul.)

I don't know... I hear myself say.  
What do you not know? you ask.  
I don't know if I should do it.  
Do what? you ask, your response sounding obtuse.  
Why don't you open it yourself, I suggest. And I  
Offer the key back to you.  
You take it  
Without delay, and  
Jerking the lead rope, you turn the pony sharply,  
Pulling him toward you  
And then you walk away  
Abruptly, the pony almost at a trot.  
Curiosity consumes me. I want to run after you  
I want to know what is in the trunk  
But I stop myself from calling after you or running  
To stop you  
I let you go  
And I determine that the next time a pretty lady rings  
At my gate, leading a saddle pony, laden with  
A mysterious trunk, I won't even bother to answer.  
I don't have time for such things.

Hm. Nes

# A Scottish Boy In A Kilt

When I was just a wee lad and didn't know a thing  
My mother used to hold me and rock me while she'd sing:  
'You'll grow to be a fine man, if you do as I ask:  
'Repair your heart when it's broken and never show your arse.'

But that's no easy task for a Scottish boy in a kilt  
Who's looking for adventure, though he's dressed to the hilt  
Then other boys start lifting. Still, he hears Momma sing:  
'Remember what I said son; hold onto that one thing.'

And what's so fine about fine men, who never thrill as boys?  
Refusing to show their arses, and loving but too few toys?  
Yet Momma's words keep calling, and there's no time like the now  
To mend a heart that's broken and to hide my arse somehow

Hm. Nes

# A Wise Father

A wise father will know the names of stars,  
Should his daughter dare to ask that of him,  
As hand in hand they walk beside the sea.  
And he will possess the skill to show her  
How to skip flat rocks across the water.

A wise father will know these things.  
A wise father will do them.

But more so, he will be the kind of man  
Who gently holds his daughter's hand in his  
And as they walk along the rocky shore  
He will tell her that she and she alone  
Is worthy of this moment.

Hm. Nes

# All I Want Is To Be Left Alone

The mountains will not come to me  
Nor dare intrude my privacy  
Unlike some nosy neighbors that I know,  
Who care not that the day was long  
That all I want is to be left alone  
To gaze up to the mountains hushed with snow.

Hm. Nes

# All-Sufficient

If provisions were always and plentiful  
And never a trouble overcame  
If honor and peace came ever unto me  
And rarely disgrace to my name

Then likely Your name would grow faint on my lips  
And hope would be a thing of the past  
My prayers would all but to obscurity fall  
For I'd be all-sufficient at last.

Hm. Nes

# Always

Always  
in the back of my mind  
the same song is playing:  
'Will She Reach For Me? '  
or just glide past  
as I deserve,  
as I myself have so  
often done  
to her.

that's the song,  
a sad song for sure,  
but it's the song  
that is Always  
playing in my head,  
in my mind,  
in the back somewhere;  
and so

it's no surprise that  
I feel  
this,  
tenseness  
when she's around-  
Always.

I hope the song  
will change  
eventually,  
like most songs do,  
as one song leads to another  
and then another  
and another  
and so on,  
often days going by  
before  
the same song plays  
again.

but this song- It  
Never  
Ends!

it just keeps on  
and keeps  
on  
playing.

she and her song  
are all I hear  
all I  
ever  
hear  
or know  
or have

Always.

all ways.

please,  
can't we make it  
stop?

Hm. Nes

# Amazing Grace

Dear Captain 'Grace, '  
I once sailed with you upon your ship,  
Not as one of your crew but as part of your cargo.  
'Twas an amazing voyage truly!  
And I remember it well, though I never saw the light of day,  
For thirty miserable days- chained, starved, diseased and tortured.  
You'll be pleased to know that I fetched a good price,  
As did my son whom I've not seen since the day he was sold.  
My wife and daughters died at sea, mercifully, aboard your ship.  
You buried them unceremoniously in shark-infested waters,  
Not far from America- the land of the free and the home of the slave.  
I'm told you've sold your ships and taken your vows.  
I hope it helps.  
As for me, I still miss my family and my home.

Hm. Nes

# At Your Coming

If I had waited  
And heard you coming before you came  
I might have waited longer  
But probably not  
For you have come before  
In other seasons  
When the flowers bloomed  
And softer music played  
As I, upon my favorite cushioned chair  
Did hold my ears in wonder  
At your coming

But then, over time, the marvel ceased  
And oft-repeated conversations  
About careless topics  
Such as yesterday's bargains and  
Tomorrow's weather  
Wore down my eager spirit  
Until now, I fail to listen for your  
Footfalls on the pavement  
Your coming neglected  
For words that will surely follow.  
I leave, not because you come  
But rather, for the lack of reason  
To stay.

Hm. Nes

# Basketball 'the Beginning'

What the 'Y' in Springfield needs most, they say,  
Is some good old athletic distraction  
For rowdy boys pinned up inside all day  
By the weather. Now 'they' propose action:

The teacher from Canada should design  
An inside game, 'fair to all' but 'not rough'  
And why not give him a gracious deadline?  
Two weeks or lose his job; it's quite enough.

The teacher chooses a soft soccer ball  
So the boys won't get hurt if they get hit,  
And fixes peach baskets high on the wall  
To reduce all rough contact deemed unfit

The rules state: Only the passing of balls  
No dribbling. No batting, just to be safe  
And running the ball? Not allowed, lest falls  
Should cause the limbs of the players to chafe.

The peach basket goals, one should never guard  
For the game is not designed for the tall  
But easy and fair to all, not too hard  
This game by Mr. Naismith- 'Basket Ball'

Hm. Nes

# Because It's There

Climbing high above the world  
Into air too thin to breathe-  
For what reason?  
Just to be there  
High above the world.

Sailing far across the ocean,  
Far from land or safe reprieve-  
And the purpose?  
Simply being  
Far across the sea.

Writing words of shapeless reason,  
Navigating soul's dark deep-  
'Why? ' you ask me  
Because it's there  
There now let it be.

(When George Mallory was asked in 1924, 'Why do you wish to climb Mt. Everest? ' he famously replied: 'Because it's there.' Mallory's frozen remains were finally located on Mt. Everest in 1999, 75 years after he ascended the mountain in an attempt to be the first westerner to summit the peak. No one knows if he made it all the way to the top.)

Hm. Nes

# Board Game Banter

Shoulda seen that comin'.  
Shoulda thought that through.  
Coulda gained a point.  
Coulda beaten you  
Had I put that there,  
Had I picked another;  
If you'd rolled a seven,  
If I'd played the other.  
Woulda made a difference.  
Woulda had a chance.  
Wanna play again?  
Almost wet my pants  
When you rolled that nine,  
When you moved the robber.  
Next time I'll be ready.  
Next time I'll clobber  
You and your momma.  
You and what army?  
Save it for the book.  
Save feathers, and tar me!  
This time I'll try.  
This time you'll wish  
We had stuck to cards-  
Played 'Spades' or 'Go Fish.'

Hm. Nes

## Brrr Months Of Fall

When facing the brrr months of fall, do remember  
That Indian Summer days come in Septembrrr,  
Octobrrr, Novembrrr and bits of Decembrrr;  
But then, brace yourself for a long winter slumber.

Hm. Nes

# Cast Away You Devil Ship

Cast away you devil ship  
And leave me safe on harbored shore  
With Captain keep in peace.

Molesting crew of cannibals,  
Set out to ravage naivete,  
Your swords will never slay my heart  
Nor save me thus to avenge for not  
Of joining in your mutiny.  
And standing by our brutalized captain,  
Though he no brute, yet mercy made,  
In coming wrath to wield his sword  
And make of merry mates that hailed  
His disgrace, not walk the plank, but  
All-consumed to fall, until he  
Alone, with me on willing knee,  
Stands victorious above all,  
His truth at last and free.

Hm. Nes

# Cats And Scars, The Moon And Stars

My cat leaves home  
Most nights to roam,  
Compelled by the moon and stars.  
For go he must,  
And I daren't trust  
He'll come back home without scars.

He sleeps all day,  
Too tired to play-  
And dreams of the moon and stars;  
Then, up to howl  
And off to prowl,  
With some pause to lick his scars.

The kitten's ways  
I miss most days-  
Never mind the moon and stars  
That beckon: 'Come!  
And have some fun.'  
With the ever risk of scars.

But that was then,  
Before his zen  
Discovered the moon and stars-  
The life at night,  
The hunt, the fight  
A life written in the scars.

Hm. Nes

# Coffee Beans

Not every man can travel to  
A land with fancy elephants  
That dance and sing and take him for a ride.  
Nor can each man acquire a tan  
By cruising 'long exotic sands  
Of beaches rich with shells from every tide.  
But rich or poor the whole world o'er,  
With all the dancing beasts of lore,  
Each man can still enjoy exotic pride;  
For coffee beans will come to him,  
Be crushed by him and drunk by him  
From every paradise the whole world wide.

Hm. Nes

# Crazy 'Do' World

It's a crazy 'do' world with so much to do,  
So get yourself busy and do it!  
I ask who you are by: 'What is it you do? '  
And what you do after you do it.

For it's do it we will and do it we must.  
All others are busy doing it.  
And doers don't tolerate a do-less gait,  
So get yourself busy; just do it!

Hm. Nes

# Creaking Rocking Chair

My heart first learned its rhythm  
From your creaking, Rocking Chair.  
Remind me where.  
Please take me there again.

Soft cradled in a bosomed nest  
Sweet, simple, happy tunes  
Accompanied your creaking, Rocking Chair.  
Remind me where.  
Please take me there again,  
Before the beating starts.

My heart first learned its rhythm  
From your creaking, Rocking Chair.  
The all familiar cadence almost  
All forgotten now.

Sing once again to me your simple tunes,  
Sweet Mother dear,  
From the creaking rocking chair.  
Remind me where the love began.  
Please take me there again,  
Before the beating starts,  
And love gives way to despair.

Hm. Nes

# Daffodils

Breaks the ground  
Sweet daffodil,  
As thunder shakes  
The gentle hill-  
Resounding beauty,  
Restive thrill,  
While tethered cattle  
Eat their fill.

Hm. Nes

# Dancing In The Rain

A chill breeze  
Wafting through the window  
Rouses me from sleep.  
Late again!

Frantically,  
Searching for a sweater-  
(Curses for the cold)  
Thunder peals!

The hunt grows-  
Adding an umbrella  
And some rubber boots.  
It's so dark

Outside, but  
Inside it's cozy warm  
Perfect for a nap  
Who needs school?

Peacefully,  
Falling back into bed,  
Dreams begin to form-  
But no, wait!

Yesterday,  
Wasn't there an announcement?  
&quot;NO DANCING IN THE RAIN! &quot;  
I must go

Naked and  
Dancing into the rain.

Hm. Nes

# Daniel's Cave

Were we to enter Daniel's cave  
Where lions dared not harm him  
Are there not bones there- a common grave  
Of those who prayed: 'Please stop them! '

The lions did not themselves choose  
To not crush Daniel, let him stand  
For God in heaven set the stage  
And hushed the lions, stayed his hand

Though at other times and oft times  
The unrecorded cave tales  
Resound with roars and helpless cries  
The lions' mouths are opened wide-  
Bones are there, stones stained red,  
Well-fed lions swish their tails  
As God in heaven sets the stage,  
And lions crush as by his hand.

Hm. Nes

# Dearest Darkness

Dearest darkness, flayed in scarlet-  
Broken dreams, treacherous ghosts, fears  
Never cease molesting your beauty

Only you, only you dare not fail  
To declare the coming light.  
None but you, none but you compel,  
Propel me into flight.

All others bid me stay, bid me sway,  
Bid me postpone the coming day.  
You alone declare His coming;  
You alone prepare the way,  
Peaceful darkness, dearest night.

Hm. Nes

# Demon Song

The demon song repeats  
Like a record skipping  
Playing the same disjointed phrase  
Over and over and over again.  
Only the loudest noises  
Demanding to be heard-  
Angry motorists, honking horns,  
Alarms, Sirens, Whistles, Bells,  
Spouses shouting,  
Kids shouting,  
Neighbors shouting,  
Teachers shouting,  
Politicians,  
Only the noisiest noises  
Can dispel the demon song.  
Silence is risky  
A quiet place will never do,  
For there the demon song is deafening,  
Demanding to be heard

Hm. Nes

# Disappointed

Odin's saint in ides past tide  
Tans did don and tines atop  
Sped to sea- Iona's sand  
Tis a Dane's appointed spot.

Spied stone nest- Iona's point  
Apt a Paddies' papist den.  
Antes paid and patens stand  
Pope's deposit add, distend

Danes adept to posit pain  
Pats inside, no spine to tap.  
One dead saint, one tepid Dane  
Dips in spade to depot sap

Sodden sot, a stein at tap,  
On to nap; a despot paid.  
Nastied diet o' pints and pain,  
Ope disdain on Paddies staid.

Paddies' ain son tied to dais,  
Ode indites and so to tone,  
Pine, despond: "Inept to aid,  
O One, Iona's Odin? "

Ode inapposite to tone,  
As painted ponies on a spin,  
Pine, despond: "Inept to aid,  
O One, Iona's Odin? "

Paddies' disappointed son,  
'Spite disdain did Dane adopt.  
Neat and poised in din o' snide,  
Pat's son sat aside oats pot

Opined:  
Iona's Odin sent a son-  
Odd idea, O Odin One.  
Paid deposit. Sin atoned.

Stopped sedition. Said, 'It's done! '

Dis-appointed Paddies' son-  
Iona's Odin opted:  
Sion stained Iona's sand,  
And Dane instead appointed.

[All 183 words above are derived from (and limited to)the 12 letters of the word 'disappointed.' Only the repeated letters in 'disappointed'- 'd' 'i' and 'p', are ever repeated in a single word of the poem.]

Hm. Nes

# Do What Sound

A little jingle on the radio  
Caught my attention last Tuesday.  
The voice sang: Do what sound...  
'Do what, do what, do what  
Sound good to me.'  
Correct grammar would have put  
An 's' on the end of sound.  
It should have been: Do what  
Sounds good to me.  
But had it sounded right, the  
Jingle would not have caught my attention,  
Nor would it have stuck in my head,  
Nor would I have remembered the website:

Nor would I have made a purchase  
From said website as a result of  
A grammatical mistake.  
Sound funny, no?

Hm. Nes

# Dreaming

Rest now, my child, your dreams embrace  
For fear won't help you in the race  
Where darkness lurks and demons dare  
To steal your hopes and bring despair

Hold on to Jesus; He is near  
Regardless where you go, He's here  
And promises to never leave  
So hold to Him, to Jesus cleave

I must to my own dreams retreat  
I'll close my eyes and loose my feet  
To travel far in slumber land  
Alone, save Jesus at my hand

And when we've gathered in the morn  
To tell our tales, the victories won  
In every dream, some dark some bright  
As Jesus came and made things right

Hm. Nes

# Dublin

The children play in the streets, they say  
The children play in the streets  
While the ships dock fast in Dublin Bay,  
The children play in the streets.

Och aye, the blarney blunderbuss,  
He's corked, and who's to blame?  
'Tain't that his wee son with a pint,  
Too soon to walk the same?

Across Ha'penny Bridge his Molly  
Bends to scratch for coal,  
And one last fire to celebrate:  
Today she quits the dole.

But what of Barry? What of Shane?  
Who'll give the tykes their bread,  
With Pap in one dyke stone-cold drunk,  
In the other Mam stone-cold dead?

The children play in the streets, they say  
The children play in the streets  
While the ships dock fast in Dublin Bay,  
The children play in the streets.

Hm. Nes

# Eiffel Tower And Ferris Wheel

Mr. Eiffel's awful tower,  
'A truly tragic streetlamp, '  
Paris fells you in the hour!  
Purge the eyesore like a scamp!

'Wait! Atop her stands the wire-  
'Saved us in the Battle Marne.  
'Leave the tower despite such ire.  
'Paris won't regret her scorn.'

All the world dreams now to see  
Mr. Eiffel's lovely tower,  
Standing proud, forgetting we  
Had planned her demolition hour.

Mr. Ferris built a wheel  
To rival Mr. Eiffel's tower.  
Most dared not believe it real-  
So high? So wide? Such power? !

What? Chicago tore it down,  
Purged the eyesore from her view,  
Shipped the wheel to Louis' town.  
There fared the same. Chagrin beaucoup.

Dynamite brought down the wheel-  
All the world denied a ride.  
Ferris' wheel- a scrapped pile of steel.  
Eiffel's tower- all France's pride.

Hm. Nes

# Every Boy Dreams

Every boy dreams of being brave  
A chance to rescue girl in need;  
While grown-man dreams oft cast him knave,  
With choices ruled by lust and greed.  
And weakened thus by cruel, dark foes,  
Accused and stumbling on he goes,  
Bowing his head, resisting dreams-  
'Tis easier far to kill the spark,  
And though she longs for him to lead,  
He forfeits courage for a lark,  
A selfish quest, alas, short-lived  
While for the girl, there's naught to give.

Hm. Nes

# Exposed

There are hidden places where I should not go,  
Though invited, where I dare not go-  
Spaces once forbidden, permitted if I risk regret.

The mountain glade untrodden, undiscovered  
With myriad, perfect blooms- every color and fragrance  
Springing to life, bids me come and gaze.

There I may go, and should go,  
My footfalls breaking the silence, wrecking tender shoots  
As I stoop to observe more closely,  
With undistracted intensity, the unparalleled beauty of  
A bloom that only I will ever see,  
Only I will ever know,  
Only I will ever taste.

While other places, equal in splendor,  
Though more intoxicating-  
Rarer in beauty, though common and known,  
Places I would best avoid-  
These places call to me.  
They draw me.  
They haunt me.

Cry louder, you rolling hills-  
You mountain paths and peaceful streams.  
Lift high your voices, you wild flowers,  
You silent temptresses,  
Lest I fall prey to the wonder of another,  
Who passing more closely to my door  
Allures me in this moment that is  
Best preserved for you.

Hm. Nes

# Fair Weather Friends

Fair weather friends  
I like the most  
Because I like fair weather.  
Besides,  
Friends who gather  
Only in storms  
Neglect me when life's better.

Hm. Nes

# Fans In The Stands

There are fans in the stands,  
Cheering indistinctly.  
It's mostly noise,  
But occasionally a clear voice is heard;  
And inspiration comes from a simple cry of, 'Yes! '  
Or, 'Go! ' Maybe, 'That's the way! '  
So we go, in the way, with a 'yes, '  
The fans in the stands helping us.

The fans in the clouds,  
The ones who have passed before,  
They too give us courage  
To endure and not lose hope,  
To cross the finish line.

But the fans in the stands,  
They race alongside us,  
Though not competing against us.  
They understand, their lives so similar,  
And their words, their touch, so real.

Hm. Nes

# First Applause

The stage is set,  
No longer thus imagined.  
The audience awaits,  
To approve or castigating judge.  
The time is come,  
And fingers full familiar, eager to perform,  
Escape to a place of peace-  
Quiet rooms of lonely repetition,  
Padded walls, closed doors;  
But then the music stops.  
What once was ripe- to feel the quiet calm-  
Is deafening now with audience embalmed.  
They are not pleased!  
But how much so?  
Will they up and leave,  
Grumbling as they go?  
Then ears used to hearing only the piano's pause,  
Explode with the triumph of applause-  
Unending applause.  
They liked it!  
But it really doesn't matter;  
Like Beethoven, you play to hear, not to be heard.

Hm. Nes

# Five Grandpas

'Hear-hear! I'll drink to that! ' cried five grandpas,  
Each offering up a toast to his own cause  
Five causes that in fact were quite the same  
Though they knew not the nature of the game.  
Five grandpas who before this day set sail  
Had never met nor shared a drink or tale  
Each being born to a different tribe  
In various lands with myriad vibes  
But sitting now together in my den  
Each grandpa's task the same: help grandson win  
By telling tales about his family past  
Inspiring by the telling what could last  
Generation after generation  
Thus, in doing so preserve a nation  
As well establishing his grandson's cause  
A good cause meant to gain the most applause  
Among his people, his own blood and kin  
(And this is where the grandpas made me grin)  
For they assumed each grandson was to lead  
A separate land, people of his own breed  
For none imagined his grandson could rule  
All peoples of the world in one great pool  
And so, the light would shine and race be won  
Upon the trail blazed by his own grandson  
And how, you ask, did this odd group of men  
All find themselves thus gathered in my den?  
I called them from the dead to help me pick  
One grandson: Newt, Mitt, Rick, Barak or Rick,  
For president of these United States  
To list among the all-American greats.  
You should have heard the tales these grandpas told  
But seldom few have witnessed tales so bold.  
Compelled was I to cast not only one  
But five votes, one for each noble grandson  
And as the stories ended with the toasts  
Such grandiose display of humble boasts  
I let the other shoe drop, so to speak  
And told them: This is what your grandsons seek:  
All five desire one office, each the same

And only one will win, one prize to claim  
 To represent the people of one land  
 As Mr. President, not near so grand  
 As 'Highness', 'Majesty' or 'Holiness'  
 And he must sort through mishap after mess  
 'Grandpas, ' I said, 'you've all done something well.  
 'Your genes and grit have prepped these men for hell.  
 'Because of you, ' I said, 'your grandsons rise  
 'To president, or some more noble prize.  
 'Forgive me, please, but could you be so kind  
 'And offer one last thought that's on your mind?  
 'Speak to your grandson, if he dares to hear.  
 'Say something true as if he'd happened near.'  
 Apostle Parley Pratt was first to speak:  
 &quot;I moved down to Mexico, across the creek  
 &quot;With all 12 wives, too many kids to count  
 &quot;I hope my grandson doesn't keep us out  
 &quot;By building some great wall that bars our way  
 &quot;Back to freedom. We love the U.S.A.&quot;  
 Next, Icy Abels stood and made his speech:  
 'The Choctaw people will no promise breach!  
 'This land is great with plenty for us all  
 'But please do not insist there be a wall  
 'That keeps my people from the fish and game  
 'Confining us inside to fleece men's shame.'  
 Hunched and awkward, Pietro stayed in his seat  
 Smoking the cigar clenched between his teeth  
 'I'll take another shot, ' he said. 'Don't mind  
 'If it's whiskey or rum. Yes, brandy's fine.  
 'I'll kill myself and thank-you to let me choose  
 'The way I please. Pass me more of that booze.'  
 The silence told me Pietro was quite through  
 Though I had hoped for more, I let him stew.  
 'Johan, ' I said, 'have you something to say? '  
 'I like women, ' he said. I said, 'Okay.  
 'Is that all you wish to communicate  
 'To your grandson? ' 'That's all, ' he said. 'It's late.'  
 Of the five grandpas summoned to my den  
 But one was left to speak. He took a pen  
 And wrote his words I leave you here to read  
 (He wrote them without pause and with great speed) :  
 'My name is Onyango. To my grandson-

'I could not be more proud of all you've done.'

Hm. Nes

## For A. Lincoln

You knew to laugh  
when trouble strangled joy  
You knew to forgive  
when enemies threatened arrest  
You knew the power of words  
when silence was preferred  
You pursued people  
when you were by every right superior  
You chose humility  
when it proved fodder for enemy canon  
You pressed on  
when there was nothing ahead but struggle  
You endured  
with no one prodding you from behind  
You stood alone  
You clung to God  
Men hated you and mocked you  
yet they came to you for favors or entertainment, and  
You granted both  
You were faithful  
despite betrayal  
You said what you knew to be true  
regardless the consequences,  
always soberly considering the potential wisdom of counselors  
no matter how inferior they proved to be  
and then,  
You died  
so that one nation could live on.

Hm. Nes

## For An Unfaithful Bride

Rejoice, my love, and rise to see  
Your captain come to take you home.  
I know. I see, (It's no surprise.)  
You share your bed with another.

I'll slay him now- he should have known-  
And spare you whole, for you belong,  
And always have, to me alone, your lover.  
Speak no more of it, I understand;  
Though tempted still to take his hand  
And run away. Receive my love now fully.

For I have always loved you thus,  
And pledged forever simple trust,  
Unshakeable and without compromise-  
A promise of my life, my love,  
And all I have as yours to hold  
Forever and with me in paradise.

Weep not! He dies, unworthy fool,  
Unworthy of one fragment small  
From your embattled heart that pines for me-  
A heart that now unfettered, free,  
Can love as I have loved but thee,  
Completely and for all eternity.

Hm. Nes

# For Edgar Allan

No not alone I dare suggest,  
Though all alone you felt; the rest  
Forsaking you upon the stage  
Midst blinding light and audience rage.  
A mother dead, a father gone  
Adopted, yet no name to don.  
The demons haunting every wall  
And floor, their brew of bitter gall  
Assailing purest love; your jewel  
Is snatched away, with none to fool.  
A heart must cling to what it can-  
Inherited from a father's hand.  
Alone to hear the raven cry,  
Alone to hear the tell-tale lie,  
Alone with only God to hear  
If only God would dare draw near;  
Replace the draught with tender love,  
Replace the naught as from above  
With truth that tells of a shepherd's care:  
No not alone for he was there

In the torrent and the fountain,  
On the red cliff of the mountain,  
At the moment mother died,  
Each occasion father lied,  
Midst the loathsome raven's cry,  
And the haunting tell-tale lie,  
From the thunder and the storm,  
And the cloud that took the form  
(When the rest of Heav'n was blue)  
Of a demon's hold on you.

Hm. Nes

## For Sid

I raise the chalice to parched lips  
Begging not to drink it  
The draught a bitter poison  
I know that full well  
But your command, repeated thrice  
Unwavering, demands I drink it dry  
And die- slowly, painfully  
'Please, please, please! ' I plead  
But your firm response  
Each time, 'No'  
Resounds in my ears  
Thus I willingly spill it  
Not the wretched cup  
But my own precious blood  
For your glory and pleasure

Hm. Nes

# For The Love Of Chess

What darkest knight, what coward lord  
Dares send his queen into the fight  
Whilst he in castle's keep?  
His noble queen expends her life  
Midst valiant steeds and bishops wise;  
Baring courage, pawning gain,  
She battles forth to save her king.

Pray tell, good master 'cross the board,  
What king can thus his queen afford  
To parry with, nor raise his sword;  
And sacrificing noble queen  
He hopes to gain another?

Do skewer this king!  
Do pin him in!  
Do check his every move!  
Do not, I say, do not let him win-  
This king who knows not love.

Hm. Nes

# For Tiger Woods

It was not that we asked too much of you;  
For you did casual ask of us believe  
That you were more than skilled to do,  
But also skilled to be, as we believe  
Ourselves to someday be: good.

Hm. Nes

# From An Irish Slave Boy

The rooster is crowing. The water is boiling  
For tea and the waking of all that I love;  
While far in the distance from waters that bless us  
Come rumblings as thunderous wrath from above.

Strange men weighed with weapons, invading our Irelands  
With cold rage that threatens to kill all that's good.  
They're murdering Father, enslaving my mother,  
And chasing the rooster as sport for their food.

O God that is righteous, will you not defend us  
From Vikings victorious who'll thank pagan Thor?  
Comes peace all transcending from Heaven's halls blending  
The wisdom of God midst this tumult of war.

Like Esther and Shadrack, Abednego, Meshack,  
My slavery will bring back the Vikings to truth-  
Of our Savior Jesus, the one who will free us.  
I'll boldly proclaim this, though I'm but a youth.

Hm. Nes

## Gentle Birch, Assailing Wind

The wind assails the gentle birch-  
She clings to dirt  
And deeply sends foundation roots  
Like straws to tap earth's bosom.  
She climbs as well with outstretched arms  
Toward the sun.  
Grasping only air, she reaches  
For life, high into the sky,  
With myriad leaves on nimble limbs,  
Singing silent songs to the  
Assailing wind.

Hm. Nes

# Gentle Fall

Gentle fall,  
If only you would linger longer,  
Hold your place more firmly  
In the face of winter's threats.  
Summer's heat yields happily to your gentle ways:  
Fresh spring-like growth,  
Fullness of flower and fruit,  
Brilliantly colored leaves  
Gliding softly to a carpeted floor.  
You would easily be my favorite season  
Were you willing to hold your place  
And battle winter until spring;  
But you are a transient season.  
Too quickly you relinquish your position  
To winter's winds and lengthening darkness.  
Please stay with us! Win my love!  
Hold your ground and I will be your most devoted fan.  
I will raise my voice and declare:  
'Autumn, autumn is the season to adore! '  
But alas, because you will not tarry,  
I cannot help but love spring more.

Hm. Nes

# Glottenham Castle

Your castle is deserted, Sir.  
Where go your servants?  
Where goes your wife?  
You live a lonely life here, Sir.  
Have you no friends?

For two long days I've watched you, Sir.  
The windows darken.  
The dogs run wild.  
Forsooth, why do you stay here, Sir?  
Do hear a child.

I left my home when Mamma died.  
She buried Papa  
With all the kids,  
Save but for me who somehow lives.  
She felt so cold.

With her last breath she whispered: 'Glot! '  
'Glottenham Castle.  
'Go there! Go there! '  
But all I find are fresh-dug graves  
And you alone.

For two long days I've watched you, Sir.  
I'm all but starving.  
The fever grows.  
I pray you'll find me in your haymow  
All alone.

Your castle is deserted, Sir.  
Do welcome a child.

(Of Glottenham Castle, Essex. Black Plague [1300-1350] killed all but one inhabitant.)

Hm. Nes

# Good Lord

My lands.

My lambs.

My limbs.

My Lord.

Nay, not my lands,

Not my lambs,

Not my limbs-

Naught but my Lord's.

Only He is mine.

All else is His-

My lands, my lambs, my limbs-

All His.

Only He is truly mine-

My Lord, and such a fine,

Good Lord He is.

Hm. Nes

# Hair

A newborn baby's mother pleads with God for hair to grow  
Atop her precious infant's christened brow.  
She wrings her hands and worries that her child will never know  
Hair; and so to heaven she makes her vow:

'Dear Lord, ' she prays, 'I give my son to follow in your ways,  
'To study wisdom and obey your word;  
'But could you make him handsome, please, to serve you all his days,  
'With lots of hair, so he won't look absurd? '

Then adolescence comes, and vows forgotten, a mother's cry  
Regards the father's loathing of son's hair.  
If heaven does not intervene her precious boy will die.  
'He's better bald than killed, ' becomes her prayer.

Then pass the years and locks do cease to fall across his face  
Instead the eyebrows grow into his eyes.  
As well the hairs on top his head migrate to lesser space  
Above the ears, while nose and ear hairs thrive.

It seems the mom was right to pray that wisdom grow with hair  
Just not in youth, as wisdom always shows  
The question isn't simply hair, but when it comes and where  
For wisdom's hair grows from the ears and nose

Hm. Nes

# Hand In Hand

two strolled  
quietly  
hand in hand  
beside the gentle brook  
thoughts intersecting

they stopped  
expectantly  
and gathered themselves  
into full embrace  
bodies intersecting

then walked on  
content  
entwined as one  
flowing as the gentle brook  
no longer intersecting

Hm. Nes

# Hello There, Mr. Dandelion

Hello there, Mr. Dandelion, so brave to come again  
And try again to build your home among my tenderer shoots.  
I must confess, your brilliant blooms inspire me every spring  
And almost (note that: almost) sway my heart to bless your roots.

But you refuse to be content to simply take your place  
Among the myriad other flowers that grow in sanctioned space,  
Spreading in gradual, happy ways content to hold one spot.  
No, you must fill, and you alone my every garden plot.

And don't! I said don't even try appealing to my kids.  
"Oh, Daddy, please!" the kids will beg. "O please, please let them live!  
"We wish to pick and blow the dandies' fluffy little pods."  
The end will never come to all the trouble that will give.

So, once again, I deeply plunge my blade into your heart  
And, somewhat sadly, end your fun and beauty from the start.  
But, kids, don't cry, the dandelions will be back, never fear.  
Surprising and spectacular, they'll tempt me every year.

Hm. Nes

# Hell's Song

The children sing but they have not yet learned  
The music of those higher forms of life  
To tune their harps with sweet sad songs that yearn  
And lust for more through endless cosmic strife  
For more of time and less of hope unearned  
And more of more, and more of what is rife  
In derelict hearts- bruised, tattered, longing for  
But soon to find that what is lost is more

Had they but known their fortunes read and white  
Would cast aside for better graves of stone  
Or marble. Have it any way you like  
Death comes in every color every tone  
With ample time for all the best of life  
With no delay, for all of time is gone  
And those who laugh can now at last laugh last  
For every fear (and every hope) has passed

Across the river cry the stones. The Styx  
Does roar so loud that I cannot quite hear  
The music of those simple-minded kids  
Who sing of hope and hope, but none of fear  
Fools! Why sing silly songs if just for kicks  
While death and hate and hell do linger near  
Why cry these stones? Why do they cry so loud  
And speak of hope? What is this life, a shroud?

But now the shroud is cast aside. My eyes  
At last, do see the hope amidst the lies.  
I hear the stones along the river Styx  
The stones cry out. They sing a song of hope  
They sing of God, but why this slippery slope?  
I'm sliding down. Is this some cosmic trick?  
At least I find that I am not alone  
Those higher forms still play our sweet sad song

Hm. Nes

# Her Scent

I feared her scent  
That it was more than I could bear  
In this present condition  
In this tenuous state of mind

Not in this life-  
This shallow, hollow existence-  
Not today of all days

Still she came into the room  
Uninvited  
Uninvited  
Largely unwanted  
And at the same time wanted  
More than reason will allow.

The words fell limply from my quavering lips,  
"Go."  
"Go away."  
"No, don't go. Stay. Stay."  
She stayed.  
And my fear turned to calm  
And then to dread

She may never go.  
What will I feed her?

Hm. Nes

# Hitting The Snooze

The waking bell sounded  
As morning upended  
And drove away fleeting  
Remainders of night;  
While deep under covers  
A feeble appendage  
Found semblance of life and  
Crawled into the light,  
Arresting the pow'r of  
Alarming attackers  
That wielded said terror  
Against peaceful dreams,  
Retreating again to  
A warm nest of limbs wrapped  
In feathers and visions  
Of happier themes.

Hm. Nes

## How Swift Will You Be?

How swift will you be  
To run to where I have fallen  
Much deserved  
While you with others screamed  
And flailed your arms  
Hoping to stop my heedless launch  
Into destruction?  
As well you stood and begged me pause  
To repent and turn away from a hellbent quest,  
But I was undeterred,  
Determined  
To destroy both soul and body  
With careless, mindless, senseless choices.  
But tell me,  
After the deed is done  
After the race is run  
After the setting sun  
The pain, the fun  
How swift will you be  
To come to where I have fallen  
To get down in the dust with me  
And grieve?

Hm. Nes

# I Walked Alone

I walked alone  
Along the rocky shore  
And marveled at the turbulence-  
The twisting of the clouds,  
The surging of the sea;  
Beauty lost in the awesomeness of it all.  
It was not until my steps arrived at last  
To a peaceful meadow  
With a tender sun,  
Wild flowers filling my eyes- pleasant thoughts,  
That I remembered to thank You;  
And then I recalled that You had guided me  
Along that lonely precipice  
Near the threatening water's edge,  
And I thought better of it.

Hm. Nes

# I Wish I'd Held The Moment

I wish I'd held the moment,  
Wish I'd understood the meaning,  
Wish I'd called the very minute fever broke.  
I wish I'd moved to Memphis  
While the children didn't matter,  
But I found myself in Phoenix in the rain.

I never thought to hide that  
I was searching for an answer  
To the age-old feeble question about life:  
The 'Why?' of one's existence  
That remains a shrouded secret  
Only some can almost understand through pain.

I wish, I wish, I wish, but  
That was then and this is now; and  
Now is all that we can have, the wishes gone.  
Return, if you can stand it,  
Sail the vessel of forgiveness  
Through the storm that may not ever find refrain.

Hm. Nes

## If You Insist

I do not wish to climb the mountain, he said  
I never did, he said  
But, if you insist, I will do so  
I'll climb the mountain, he said  
Join you in your quest, if you insist  
If you really must have me along  
As long as, he said, you fetch the stuff:  
The maps, the gear, the mess,  
All that's needed for the journey  
Remember, he said  
I did not wish to climb the mountain

Hm. Nes

# It's A School Day

Welcome home, kids!  
How was school?  
Now get to work.  
You know the rule:  
No games, no shows  
Till the homework's done.  
First do your chores,  
Then have some fun.  
O my, it's late!  
No time to play.  
Be off to bed, 'cause  
It's a school day.

Hm. Nes

# Jonah

The Lord God said to Jonah:  
Go to Ninevah and preach!  
Tell those nasty Philistines that I'm a comin' to clean their streets.  
You can tell `em I'm fed up with their lies, and  
You can tell `em they're all about to die!  
And you're the one that's gotta tell `em, Jonah,  
'Cause I've decided that you're my guy  
Not because you're somebody special  
Or because you look good in a tan  
Not because you're made of honey  
Or because your mom's a fan  
Not because I can't do it all by myself  
Or because there's no one else to send  
But just because I picked you to do it, Jonah;  
Now go and tell those bums: It's the end!  
It's the end of all their shenanigans  
The end of all their so-called fun  
I bought my ticket on the next train to Ninevah  
And they've got no place to run  
I plan to stay in every hostel, in every palace room and hall,  
I'll bunk down at the Johnson's and spend two weekends at the mall  
I'll be with you, Jonah, when you tell them that these are their final days  
And it's time we left to get there, Jonah...  
Jonah...  
Jonah...

Jonah pretended that he didn't hear the Lord  
Jumped a ship that took him far away  
Far away from the nasty Philistians  
And the things God had told him to say  
But God was on that boat to Tarshish  
And God was in that big ole fish  
God was on that beach when the whale puked Jonah out  
Then served him up like a dish  
A dish of putrid, filthy, leftovers  
That showed Ninevah just how bad God was ticked  
And that God was about to rid the world of every miserable Philistine prick

But then a strange response took place that day

The day that Jonah finally started to preach:  
The Ninevites suddenly repented,  
Came out of hiding and took to the streets  
They begged God to give them a second chance  
They promised to turn from all their wicked ways  
Then God agreed to let them live, and God repented himself that day

The day the Philistines became a people of God  
The day that Ninevah became God's own  
The day that Jonah sat down outside of town  
And only thought of himself and a worm  
A worm that ate the only thing Jonah cared for in all the world besides himself,  
A nasty worm that came from nowhere, although it seemed to come from hell  
But the Lord had sent the worm, and a nasty heat, and a scorching wind  
Just to teach poor Jonah a lesson about God's heart toward stubborn men  
And how God loves the smallest of things, like a plant that gives a bit of shade  
Or a fat old cow, or more importantly a child that he himself has made.

Hm. Nes

# Lana Jane

Every boy loved her- Lana Jane,  
And who could blame them? She was fair,  
Of perfect form and beauty rare,  
But none could have her, Lana Jane,  
The fisherman's only daughter,  
And he no man to barter.

For he would take poor Lana Jane  
To sea, and she would stay the boat  
When harbored; thus, a dreadful moat  
Would bar the way to Lana Jane,  
The fisherman's only daughter,  
But he refused to barter.

In fourteen years, sweet Lana Jane,  
Was never seen upon the shore  
Among the boys who wanted more  
Than life to see their Lana Jane,  
The fisherman's only daughter,  
Whose father ne'er would barter.

The legend grew of Lana Jane,  
While scores of ports, legions of ships  
Claimed: "She's aboard! " through whispered lips,  
"The rarest beauty, Lana Jane,  
"The fisherman's only daughter.  
"She's yours to see. Let's barter! "

Hm. Nes

# Laughing So Hard Their Sides Ached

Yes, of course  
I noticed  
The limp.  
How could you not  
Notice? He practically  
Rocks  
As he walks. But  
I was surprised to learn  
He has no leg  
At all-  
Only a stub.  
The train took the rest.

It must have been  
A hoot  
For the boys  
To jump on and off  
A moving train-  
Eight-year-olds,  
And laughing  
So hard  
Their sides ached.

He still laughs,  
But now  
The pain is in  
His leg  
(the one that's missing)  
It hurts  
To always rock  
When you walk.

I asked him if he  
Is looking forward to  
Heaven  
And a new leg.  
"I'm getting wings, " he responded,  
Rather matter-of-factly.

Hm. Nes

## Letter Home (May 1st 2011)

Dear Mom, they said I could say this much- I'm fine.  
And, O, I fired my weapon for the first time  
In live action. They were right: I loved the thrill.  
They also said, "Don't think of the ones you kill.  
'Instead, you have to think about the reason...'  
Remember gearing up for the eighth season  
Of Friends, staying up all night watching old shows?  
The phone woke us. "Don't answer! " you said. "Who knows?  
"It could be my boss. He'll know I hit the snooze.  
"I'll lose my job." But only you didn't lose-  
All the others consumed by the smoke and flames.  
As we watched, you said, "Everything's gonna change."  
Soon we heard his name, the guy who claimed credit  
For bombing your shop, and you almost in it.  
I swore that I'd kill him for what he had done.  
You said, "You're eleven! " I said, "I'm your son! "  
On long, dark, cold nights, it is you that I miss  
And for you that I kept a small boy's promise.  
They said I could tell you just this much- I'm fine,  
And, O, I fired my weapon for the first time.

Hm. Nes

# Louisiana Purchase

I hail from Butte, Montana;  
Although Bob, Louisiana  
Is the place I go when winter catches cold.  
As Faribault, Minnesota,  
And Fort Pierre, South Dakota,  
Suit me better when the walleyes hit and hold.

'Buy land! ' Sam Clem advised me,  
"Cause they've stopped the making of it.'  
So I'm carting bags of dixies off to France,  
To buy Mexico, the new;  
Because the old, Spain beat me to-  
Grabbed it all before the Frenchies had a chance.  
Or maybe Bonaparte can  
Take a slice of Arkansas and  
Let me have it for real cheap, or less; let's hope.  
I'd settle for Alberta-  
Canada is not a bad place-  
Or Saskatchewan's resplendent glacier slope.

Monroe bought Oklahoma-  
He and Jefferson- Missouri,  
Colorado, bits of Texas, Kansas too,  
Napolean's North Dakota;  
Des Moines, Iowa; Lyons, Nebraska-  
Only three cents per acre! Merci beaucoup!  
Bordeaux, Fontenelle, Dubois,  
Dunoir, La Barge, La Grange, Lamont-  
All Wyoming sold but not New Orleans' port.  
So maybe I'll just buy that-  
Fishing's good enough I reckon,  
In a port, if you know what you're looking for.

Hm. Nes

# Merciful Maker Of Waters And Whiles

Merciful Maker of waters and whiles,  
Spare please my son from the fierce crocodiles,  
Then he too will know you.  
I'll rear him to fear you.  
He cannot survive in the waters of the Nile.  
This trial is too great! The boy is my child!  
O Merciful Maker of waters and whiles,  
Spare please my son from the fierce crocodiles.

Pharoah's command is most certainly vile:  
'Kill each boy child born in all of Israel! '  
I hear mothers weeping.  
The monsters are feasting.  
A child's meat is sweet to those beasts in the Nile.  
Revile this intrusion lest I fall beguiled,  
O Merciful Maker of waters and whiles.  
Spare please my son from the fierce crocodiles!

Alas, and I fear never more will I smile.  
They've taken my baby boy down to the Nile.  
My son is not screaming.  
It sounds like he's singing;  
Though soon he will bathe as among pedophiles.  
Denial will not spare him nor savoring bile.  
O Merciful Maker of waters and whiles,  
Spare please my son from the fierce crocodiles.

Merciful Maker of waters and whiles,  
Who spared not my son from the fierce crocodiles,  
But spared instead Moses,  
And he will deliver  
All children of Israel from out of the Nile.  
In this trial I'll praise you and smile in this while,  
O Merciful Maker of waters and whiles,  
Who spared not my son from the fierce crocodiles.

Deliverer Moses resembles your child,  
O Merciful Maker of waters and whiles;  
Though Moses was rescued

But your son not spared-  
Devoured his flesh as with beasts of the Nile.  
You meanwhile were pleased as you stood by and smiled,  
O Merciful Maker of waters and whiles,  
Who spared not your own son to make me your child.

Hm. Nes

# Moments

Moments spread upon the table,  
Select as many as you'd like:  
Sacred moments,  
Pleasant moments,  
Moments that make memories,  
Magical moments,  
Scary moments,  
Moments that linger.  
The choice is yours-  
As many as you'd like,  
But only enough for a lifetime.  
Will you choose a moment of surprise,  
Though it slices into other moments?  
Will you choose pain?  
Or only laughter?  
Will you choose one moment again and again?  
Will you share your moments with others  
Or keep them all to yourself?  
Moments spread upon the table,  
Choose as many as you'd like,  
Until the last moment is all that remains.

Hm. Nes

# Mona Lisa

Of this I am quite certain- she is mine  
Although today I saw her for the first time  
With my own eyes, whereas in times before  
I saw but just a picture, nothing more  
Though others often spoke of her and said  
She's special, though no man has shared her bed  
And as they spoke of her I paid no mind  
Until today, and now I know she's mine

As well they said her real name is not known  
Though some do search in vain to find her home  
But never quite know where the search should start  
Until this quest was birthed fresh in my heart  
For Mona Lisa does belong to me  
My every thought declares this surety  
Sweet Mona Lisa, only mine to own  
While she to other men remains unknown

And gathered they in droves to catch a glimpse  
One passing glance then ponder with pretense  
That she was worth the wait and all the fuss  
Expensive flights, long lines and crowded bus  
And I too poised myself to take a picture  
A selfie shot, a picture of a picture  
But sudden feelings avalanched, intense  
And Mona Lisa owned me with one glimpse

Hm. Nes

# Monsters Everywhere

Alternating legends

Twixt the forest and the sea-

'The monster, ' some say, 'keeps to the water! '

While others claim, 'The trees! '

But I have seen him quit the seashore, and

I have watched his forest leave.

No doubt he haunts whichever suits him-

One day woodlands, the next mid-sea.

So you who fear sea-monsters most

Beware his path along the coast.

And ne'er forget his forest lair,

You who fear him mostly there.

Hm. Nes

# Morning Mercy

Each morning mercy, come what may,  
A blustery cold or sunny day-  
Each morning mercy finds his way to me.  
And though I scarce would turn him out,  
For rare the morning finds no need,  
Much less to doubt his work to do.  
Bereft of him, ne'er make it through  
A day without his mercy speed.  
I love the morning mercy new.

Hm. Nes

# Mount Everest

Sir Edmund Hillary first achieved  
(For centuries unattained)  
The summit of earth's highest peak,  
And what did he there gain?

So many corpses linger there,  
Of those arrived or no,  
To strike a pose atop the world,  
Then turn and back down go.

All climbers lose, if not their lives-  
Their minds at least are numbed.  
Most simply fail to reach the top,  
By tragedies overcome.

Yet on and on the climbers come;  
The challenge must be taken.  
For God has placed Mount Everest there-  
So low, so far below His throne  
That never will be shaken.

Hm. Nes

# My Daffodils

Who is this fool who rages  
In the night amidst my daffodils  
As if he had the right to roam within?  
Does he not care for breath so sweet,  
His own I mean, that he would tread  
Upon my green and tamper with  
My daffodils?

Say, Fool, that lingers long where  
I, no fool, would have you never come  
But take your leave and see you ne'er return,  
Where gardens filled with daffodils,  
And lacing every windowsill,  
Will never want your presence haunting near.

Hm. Nes

# My Emiline

I touched her hand and she was gone  
The moment left as fast it came,  
And I am certain I will never love again

She called herself my Emiline  
O, how I hoped she could be mine,  
But all is lost and I shall ever lose, nor win-

No hand to hold, no love to share,  
My perfect Emiline not there-  
Farewell sad world. Farewell, and do not bid me stay.

Breathe this the last of decent air  
Breathe all for me, if breath you dare,  
Where joy is borrowed without leave on sun-filled day

She held my heart, as would a dove,  
Held gentle fingers round my love,  
But only memories hold onto the fading joy

Where whispers soft and whispers deep  
Brought tenderest longings full and sweet,  
And now, this mortal man cannot endure death's coy

Damn setting suns! Damn rising moons!  
Damn each bright star that made her swoon!  
Damn one and all, though senseless damning holds no sway

On fickle love or fainting heart  
How she has ripped my life apart,  
While all the world sings lullabies too sad for song

And 'they' will say I'm better when  
My heart has found another. Then,  
They'll scream: O my, can you believe he did her wrong?

But naught can touch this heart of mine-  
Their words, their screams. O Emiline,  
My heart will stand no more of this wan, loveless day.

Hm. Nes

# No More Gay

I don't need words as much as words need me,  
For I may live in silence; not so words,  
Which cannot survive in obscurity.

And oft words lose their true identity  
From ill-use of vulgar mouths; blessed words-  
Destroyed, defaced, banished to infamy.

O that good men could once again be gay,  
Without all the confusion; splendid word  
That now must die of neglect- no more gay.

Hm. Nes

# Noble Blood

The time has come, and so remains,  
To draw in blood from shallow veins  
The lives of men who scarcely know,  
Nor care for troubles brewed in gold,

Of nobles nobled by their blood  
Ne'er spilt, yet drowning in said flood,  
Designed of wealth that bade them bathe  
In precious blood of those who crave

For gold? No! But of want to live  
In peace, with love to families give.  
While noblemen, their gold to hold,  
Ignoble spill rich blood that bold

Declares to those who listen well  
A story true, and to retell  
For children's children's future child  
Who stands at last, no longer mild.

Then times will come, and thus remain-  
The blood that flowed in common veins  
Will noble be, and noble names  
Will common bleed for others' gains.

Hm. Nes

## O Stubborn Leaf

Alone, suspended high above the ground,  
On barren limb, defying season's change-  
O stubborn leaf! Was I to winter bound,  
Was I a hapless slave to winter's rage,  
I'd set aside this ghastly rake,  
Climb your bough and give it a shake,  
Bring you down to where broken leaves are found.

But in my heart I share your stubborn hold,  
Resisting winter's scourge upon the trees.  
I cherish fall, the brilliant days of gold  
And red, such colors dancing in the leaves,  
Not fading brown from winter's freeze,  
Falling, rotting, filling the eaves,  
Till every trace is buried in the cold.

Hm. Nes

# Off The Trail

My rebel soul did quit the path and bade my legs to follow  
Deep into the woods, no trails to guide through mountain gorge or hollow  
No other man to choose for me which left or right to take  
To crest the knob below the bluff or climb to view the lake  
And taking longer to cross each fallen tree  
Through thickest briars, at times on bended knee  
At last, I came to an opening deep, deep in the darkest wood  
Far from any trail, I was sure no eye had seen nor could.  
None before had felt the thrill of this particular place  
I posed and took a picture of my own enraptured face

While gazing down upon this rich display of nature from  
My vantage point overlooking the lake and setting sun  
I saw a gap in the trees somewhat higher, to the left  
From there, I mused, the vista would be the absolute best.  
Making my way across rocky precipice  
Through muck and debris, I heard a cry of bliss  
'Ah, ' the voice said, unable to contain a reverent awe.  
Then stumbling, sliding, trying desperately by clutch and claw  
To make my way to the clearing, again I heard her say,  
'Hello there! Sir, do you need my help? Will you be okay? '

'No thanks, ' I said. 'I'm fine, ' I said, blood seeping from my palms  
'You sure? ' she asked. My words had not helped to allay her qualms  
'Just go! ' I wanted to shout, perturbed by that hiker's gall  
But holding my tongue, I struggled on up the mountain wall  
Hoping to make the clearing before sundown  
I heard: 'There's a lovely trail that starts in town  
'And from the trail the most spectacular views can be seen.  
'I'm afraid you've missed this one today.' But she wasn't mean  
When she said it. It was just the way it was, and I knew  
I had what I had come for- an adventure with my own view.

Hm. Nes

# Oh To See

grave the distance between truth and reality  
the truth so clear to you  
but honestly, not so clear to me  
though formed, nevertheless, in my mind.  
i know this:  
i cannot move.  
i have it not within myself to consider  
much less to embrace, the  
constructs, the precepts, the landscape  
the lines, the truth so clear to you  
or so you make it seem

is it clouds in my way? clouds that obstruct  
my view, clouds that may someday  
disperse and blow away  
till i see as do you  
or am i simply blind? groping as a man in  
total darkness, inept, unable  
and with absolute hopelessness, to ever see  
what you see, to ever see  
like you

Oh to grace, Oh to see  
as the debtor i'm constrained  
to be, yet not constrained  
to see

faith, i thought, was an assurance  
of the things we can only hope for  
of the things we cannot see  
and yet you see, and see so well  
how is that? and with such clarity  
are you never blinded  
by clouds? or  
are the clouds only real to me?

Hm. Nes

# Once More I Rise

Once more I rise  
My eyes, my lungs filled with the dust  
Of the arena floor

You are too strong, my worthy foe

The crowd clamors for blood  
My blood  
As once more I rise  
This last time  
Before I fall, finally and forever

But I do not rise for you  
No, not for you  
Nor certainly for the pleasure of jeering voices  
Fomenting hate, though they know not whom  
They so despise

But, in a way, I die for them  
I represent their dark souls  
In my disgrace, I somehow give them hope  
Hope that they too may someday vanquish  
Their enemies

But I do not choose to rise for them  
And I most certainly do not rise for you,  
Although, you are worthy  
Of this, my final stand  
And a chance to prove  
The full strength of your hand

No, I do not rise for you but  
For myself  
My pride mostly  
Which is all that remains of this miserable life:  
Pride in the one I had hoped to become  
Victor in this dark arena

And so, as I rise

It is only pride that rises  
And only pride that will fall  
The rest of who I am or ever was or ever hoped to be  
Still lies buried in the dust  
Nevermore to rise

Hm. Nes

# One Troubled Night

One troubled night in June of '82  
I thought I wanted you.  
The place was not of mercy made,  
And yet, his hand of mercy stayed  
To rescue me from long embattled soul.  
So oft would I have stumbled there,  
With little care, and foolish, blind,  
Pursued disastrous course,  
But rescue came, and then-  
And then I called his name.

Hm. Nes

# Orange, Gorringe, Bloreng, Wales!

Orange, Gorringe, Orange, Bloreng,  
Orange, Gorringe, Bloreng, Wales!

Poets care not much for orange, as so little rhymes with orange,  
Not much, save the mountain, Bloreng, outside Abergavenny, Wales.  
Not a soul lives up on Bloreng- more a hill with little orange;  
Though one champion horse in Bloreng lies entombed among her dales.  
No, the medal wasn't orange but gold, Foxhunter won for Wales;  
Thus, he's honored amidst her dales.

Orange, Gorringe, Orange, Bloreng,  
Orange, Gorringe, Bloreng, Wales!

There is a noted General Gorringe, known by some as 'Bloody Orange, '  
Knighted, Sir George Frederick Gorringe, who lies in Shoreham, not in Wales.  
And first class cricketer, H. Gorringe, also rhymes his name with orange,  
Proudly donning the color orange and swinging midst Australian gales.  
Long dead the soldier, 'Bloody Orange, ' but lives the cricketer who hails:  
"Bats, not swords, for New South Wales! "

Orange, Gorringe, Orange, Bloreng,  
Orange, Gorringe, Bloreng, Wales!

Finally, I'll mention one last Gorringe- Henry Honeychurch, yes, Gorringe,  
Who crossed the seas to reach New Orange, out of Egypt, not of Wales,  
Cleopatra's ancient needle Gorringe gifted to the town, New Orange.  
For New York was once called New Orange, though apples now fill orange pales.  
Such a gift! And from a Gorringe!  
Alas, but here ends the orange tales.  
Orange, Gorringe, Bloreng, Wales!

Hm. Nes

# Picture Perfect

She always looks her best and opens wide  
Her arms, with not one challenge to my pride  
Upon her lips not else but trust. Her eyes,  
With tender wanting, captivate my heart  
And I, lose every battle at its start  
Without a place to turn, no place to hide

Save in her arms- I hide there in her arms  
And puzzle at the ringing of alarms  
On every side: Beware, they say. She harms  
And ruins lives, at least the parts held dear,  
But I resist the urge brought on by fear  
To flee beyond the reaches of her charms

For she is not like other girls whose quest  
Seems but to undermine my average best  
Confirming what I always knew, that less  
Of me is much preferred. And girls concerned  
With finding naught but Superman have learned  
That I, inept, can never pass such tests

And so, I'll keep my distance from the grind,  
The measured scale that hopes a prince to find  
While I, know all too well I'm not the kind  
Of guy, to someday be a noble prince  
Or Superman, or something better, since  
My dreams are worth not else but to malign

Though she, who always looks her very best  
And with her eyes betrays a princely quest  
That finds resolve in me; then bares her breasts  
To validate- though I unworthy be  
While she, the picture perfect one for me  
Lowers said bar and helps me pass the test

Hm. Nes

# Pile Of Puppies

What man can resist yon pile of pups  
In the frisk and frolic of play?  
Who'll not insist, 'Let's take home just one  
'To enjoy all the livelong day.'

Do note the man with wan, troubled face  
No puppy can cause to smile,  
His memories fresh, all wonder erased  
By a pup from another pile  
Who howled every night and chewed up the couch,  
Who soiled every rug on the floor,  
Who grew to a dog and then to a slouch  
That ate every morsel and more.

That man will resist yon pile of pups  
No matter how frisky at play;  
He too will insist, 'Let's not take one home!  
'Let's not spoil this fine, peaceful day.'

Hm. Nes

# Praise

lavished praise  
that oft repeats  
is not so dear  
as rarest praise  
so pure  
so sweet  
that comes but seldom  
and unexpected  
to the ear

Hm. Nes

# Pretzel Seller

How happened you along these sands  
And smelled the fragrant pretzels baking-  
In this fair land the pretzels are  
A symbol for the cause of man,  
Too long oppressed by those who hoped  
His course to straighten  
With fetters and with chains.

A special price for you, no less.  
For you are not a common man  
That happens by upon these sands  
And smells the fragrant pretzels baking.

The sand remembers men like you  
Who came before with fetters, chains,  
Intended thus to break and straighten  
What remained of pretzels baking,  
Fragrant pretzels baking along these sands.

Hm. Nes

# Quiet Waters

Take me back to quiet waters  
Though the brook's polluted now  
And all muddied by the cow

Still I'll go to find what matters  
Search the attic of the house  
Chase away the little mouse

Mom and Dad will fix me coffee  
Open up the album book  
Show old pictures of the brook

Before the factory dumped in poison  
Took away our peaceful stream  
Stole for good our lovely scene

Thankfully we do have pictures  
If not ruined over time  
By neglect or turpentine

Dad was steady, Mom a tower  
Though they seldom stopped to write  
Never stooped to pick a fight

Till the factory tore the house down  
Buried cow and mouse in brook  
Left for me this troubled look

Pictures faded and the memories  
Poison fills my heart with pain  
Fear I'll never be the same

Mom and Dad are passed forever  
Coffee's cold but my heart's hot  
Unforgiveness, bitter rot

Take me please to quiet waters  
Stable rest for troubled soul  
Peace at last I long to know

I must go to find what matters  
At the cross where Jesus died  
For my grief was crucified

He will trade my pain for joy there  
At the cross my Jesus cares  
Happy day! My sins He bears

Hm. Nes

# Rage, Winter, Rage!

Rage, Winter, rage!  
And fell my heart  
Mine severed dreams that see you as you are:  
A pommel horse (pummeling, pummeling)  
A renegade  
A saber-toothed tiger (I'm pointing fingers now.)  
One-eyed (ha!)  
Blast me, Duke, blast me!  
I've lost my mind  
And you had hoped to harvest some for science  
Alas, the thaw will come  
'Twill come (wrapping my cloak tighter about me)  
Must come (and tighter still; clinched jaw)  
Come, come, the piper's son  
Marmalade (sung through chattering teeth)  
Ma... ma... marmalade...  
And spring  
Yes, Spring!  
That was the word I was looking for  
Winter, you old coot!

Hm. Nes

# Rahab

'Who here belongs to Rahab? '  
Asked the spy who sacked the city.  
He with his strange army  
Knocking down our city walls.

'Belongs? ' you say, to Rahab,  
The harlot we call 'Monster'  
Why she belongs to every man  
Though no man belongs to her.

So, what! She tied a red thread  
In her window on the wall,  
Where a red light always shines.  
There's plenty there to hide.

Who here belongs to Rahab?  
Who would say if true it was?  
For Rahab is and always will be  
A monster and a whore to us.

Hm. Nes

# Reciprocity

An old friend telephoned today  
Proposing that we meet:  
'It's been too long since last we joined;  
'A meeting would be sweet.'

And so I entered into his joy:  
'By all means, let's get together! '  
But then his scheme took on new light.  
'Your place? ' he said. 'It's better.'

And then: 'Your wife prepare the meal?  
'What time is best to come?  
'I'll not stay late, give you time to clean.  
'My, won't this be fun? '

'I'm glad I had this great idea, '  
He said. 'We're quite the team.  
'But next time maybe you'll do more;  
'I thought of everything.'

Hm. Nes

# Red Bird

The red bird oft reminds me of  
The Father's always love  
Especially on days when joy does fade  
With echoes of the past and pressures  
More than one can bear  
While fallenness reminds of what we had  
Before the red bird's song was lost  
To hollow lies of serpent's tongue  
Though nail-pierced hands did pay the cost  
For broken lives from garden flung  
And we within that fallen man  
Endure the curse in an enslaved land

But out of nowhere red bird sings  
And lights upon my sill  
I cannot help but know that God does smile  
That He has ne'er forsaken me  
And that He loves me still  
Although, I had been tempted for awhile  
To think that I was all alone  
Without a lover, not one friend  
In brokenness, all faults to own  
And carry stumbling to the end  
Till red bird offered simple song  
And bid my heart to sing along

Hm. Nes

# Road Jerks

It's funny  
how those whose  
lives are going  
nowhere  
are in such  
a whopping, big  
hurry to  
get there.

Hm. Nes

## Roger Renfroe-Jones Kincaid

The meanest boy in all the fourth grade  
Is Roger Renfroe-Jones Kincaid.  
He's meaner than a junkyard dog.  
He's meaner than my sister's frog.  
My sister's frog ate my friend, Brown,  
When all Brown did was fly around  
And land on top the frog's dumb head.  
Brown licked his wings and 'THWACK!' was dead.  
My sister calls her frog Boo Bear;  
Though he's a frog and not a bear.  
But bears get mean when they're afraid,  
Like Roger Renfroe-Jones Kincaid.

Hm. Nes

# Same Ol' Same Ol'

I eat the same ol' cereal for breakfast every day.  
I drive the same ol' car to work and go the same ol' way.  
I tell the same ol' jokes to all my same ol' - same ol' friends.  
I watch the same ol' T.V. shows with new but same ol' spins.  
I walk the same ol' dog, and he marks all the same ol' trees.  
I wear the same ol' t-shirt, same ol' cap and same ol' jeans.  
I give the same ol' answer to the same ol', 'How are you? 's.'  
It's: 'Same ol' - same ol'; ' 'cause I like the same ol's that I choose.

Hm. Nes

# Sand Dusky

I have worn this cross in battle  
I have born it, blood in hand  
Through the raging storms and idle  
Days of playing in the sand  
Along beaches filled with children  
Singing gaily to the winds  
Yet, the cross, hung at my shoulders  
Hidden from my closest friends

Well-armed soldiers, fierce in conflict  
Could not tear it from my heart  
Storm the castle, scale the tower  
Do their worst with darkest art  
But I would never tell  
No, I'd never tell

I'd rather fall in breathless wander  
All alone with none to hold  
Than to stand before their judgment  
Hoping somehow to be bold  
Brave enough to tell the story  
All that mattered, raw but true  
Starring me in tales so gory  
None but kids would dare to view  
Kids who would never tell  
They could never tell

Would to God that someone could have  
Known this cross was at my neck  
Had the strength to wrest it from me  
Somehow, save me from the wreck  
That now defines all of my life and  
Redefines all life before,  
Before the cross came into view and  
Brought the whole world to my door

Hm. Nes

# Shadows Of Trees Dancing

Shadows of trees dancing  
Always dancing  
All along the path  
Constantly moving  
But never traveling  
Down the path or up it.  
Shadows are bound to the shapes that make them  
Like the trees that cast them.

Shadows of trees dancing  
Always dancing  
But never moving along the path  
Like the path itself  
Though it winds so far  
From village to village  
And back again.  
The path only dances  
Always dances  
But never moves along.

Only the man  
Moving in and out of the dancing shadows  
Moving up and down the dancing path  
Only the man  
Moving along  
Always moving along  
Often forgets to dance.

Hm. Nes

# Shakespeare

Were you there, Sir William dear,  
With King James in holy writ?  
Did you sign by 'shake' and 'spear'-  
Sign your name in sacred script?

Some say, 'It's mere coincidence!  
Then they add, with an epithet,  
'Nor did the fraud even pen  
'Romeo and Juliet.'

Scoffers can scoff, but I believe  
You were there with good King James;  
And in a way not to deceive  
You found a means to sign your name.

It's no surprise you chose the Psalms  
And the number of your years-  
Forty-six, Oh man of poems,  
Hidden in this song of fears

Crafting music with your pen,  
English words for Hebrew song,  
Working magic yet again  
So that all could sing along:

'God delivers from the flood.  
'He will make all wars to cease.  
'Be still! Know that He is God.  
'Rivers flow from Him in peace.'

First, you signed but half your name,  
Forty-sixth word from the start:  
Though the earth 'shake' God's the same;  
He will never, ever part.

Then you signed the other half,  
Forty-six words from the end:  
Break the 'spear, ' unleash your wrath,  
God, and remember me, your friend.

Scoffers, go on, have your say.  
Grab the world and give it a shake.  
Take from Shakespeare every play.  
Say you think that he's a fake.

I will thus take up my spear,  
Dipped in ink, and here proclaim:  
William Shakespeare wrote 'Shakespeare'  
As well the Bible of King James.

Hm. Nes

# Shenandoah

Into deep, blue misty valley  
Wan, the pale-skinned trader came  
From across the wide Missouri,  
Nay seeking fortune, neither fame,  
But Shenandoah's dark-eyed daughter,  
"Sally be her 'Christian' name."

Seven years and seven long journeys  
O Shenandoah, hear them plea  
Your only daughter wants the trader,  
And he will love her tenderly,  
Though he will take her from the valley  
Shenandoah, never more to see.

O Shenandoah, O Shenandoah,  
She will always be your child,  
Though far across the wide Missouri  
Into unknown lands and wild.  
Trust the trader with your treasure  
Shenandoah, for a while.

Soon or later, he will bring her  
Back to Shenandoah's misty blue  
For a father's love is needed  
Yes, a father's love is true.  
O Shenandoah, O Shenandoah  
You'll see, she'll come again to you.

Hm. Nes

# Shifting Sands

When God abandons us  
to the shifting sands  
below  
our blistered feet,  
sands that threaten  
to swallow us  
whole

at first  
we cry out  
to God

God!  
are you there?  
will you help us?  
when? how long?

it is not possible  
for us  
to hold on  
any longer

but hold on  
we must  
and trust God  
what else is there to do?

the sands are hungry  
and must be  
satisfied:  
the sands will feast  
on our ravaged bodies

alone  
with only God  
and the shifting sands,  
sands of time,  
offered  
in a mirky glass

for us to drink

and we are  
so  
very  
thirsty

parched,  
on the brink of death  
with only sand,  
shifting sands,  
to satisfy our thirst;  
and so,  
we drink

what else is there to do?  
but drink  
and sink  
down  
into  
the sand.

Hm. Nes

# Sisters And Brothers

Sisters do what sisters do,  
But often two together;  
As brothers do what brothers do,  
Though one oft does it better.  
But the sister thing and the brother thing  
Are different things altogether;  
So sisters do!  
And brothers do!  
Do your things, but  
Don't dis one another.

Hm. Nes

## Small, Jittery, Sparrowlike Bird

small, jittery, sparrowlike bird-  
(i've no idea what to call it, save small and jittery and sparrowlike.)  
perched for one moment,  
ever so briefly,  
atop the sill of my open window.  
he seemed curious as to what I might be writing.  
he caught my attention,  
and then my eye,  
and he was gone.  
i wonder what assessment he made regarding my words?  
i'm writing about him now;  
maybe he'll come back and see for himself.

Hm. Nes

# Snow On The Pines

Reclining slowly,  
Softly to the ground,  
Pressed without a sound  
By the gentle mounting  
Of new fallen snow.

Lush boughs descending,  
Bending, though no fear  
Molests her beauty dear;  
For melting snow will extend  
Her life once again.

Hm. Nes

# So Many Flowers

So many flowers in the neighbor's lawn  
Their fragrance sweet, and my soul longs  
To pluck their stems, to take them home  
None else but I to own

None else to share, nor beauty taste  
Feel gentle touch upon my face  
In peaceful silence share embrace  
No love compares to this

And yet the neighbor holds the hose  
That waters what is his. He knows  
My heart is full, my passion flows  
To hold what is not mine

The gentle blossoms, delicate  
More rich than all the world. Regret  
Pours over every thought of mine,  
As flowers fade with time.

Hm. Nes

# So Many Saves

We celebrate  
the whippoorwill  
we saved in the garden  
from the cat.  
The cat we saved  
from the tractor engine.  
The tractor we saved  
from a fire in the barn  
the day we saved the cow  
from the flu  
brought in by a whippoorwill.  
So many saves!  
Save leads to save.  
Life is salvation  
following salvation.

Hm. Nes

# South Carolina Gop Primary 2012

So, whom will you vote for this time, Republicans?  
Whom will you vote for today?  
Though Mitt is the one you have groomed for the job,  
Whom will you vote for this day?

Four years ago Mitt was prepared to step in  
When you felt like McCain wasn't right,  
But then you picked John and not Mitt for the win  
Because... because... because why?

Each time that you vote, you choose Mitt near the top,  
But someone else always takes gold.  
C'mon man, I know that there's more to this drop  
In the poles than the reasons you've told?

When asked if you think Mitt looks good and sounds good,  
You say that he's more than you need.  
In terms of financial and business success,  
You love Mitt, and that's guaranteed.

His family is perfect; they are more than good.  
"More than good."\* Is that what you said?  
You love everything that you see in Mitt's brood,  
But you choose another instead.

Each time a new rival steps onto the stage  
You lavish them with fickle love  
Until, that fair-haired child falls from your grace,  
Leaving Mitt, when push comes to shove.

First Bachman, then Perry, you even tried Paul.  
The Cain train pulled out with great speed,  
But each of the 'new kids' was destined to fall,  
With Mitt left alone in the lead.

Santorum and Gingrich remain at Mitt's heels,  
They've promised to not go away.  
In Iowa, finally, Rick got the steal,  
And Newt will win Dixie today.

So, why all these difficult losses for Mitt,  
Who you claim is more than just good?  
Republicans, tell me, because I won't quit  
Till you tell me. I think you should!

C'mon man, I know there's more. Don't be obtuse!  
But you say, "No more, man! No more."  
It sounds like you said: 'No Mormon! ' Is that true?  
And, 'no more'? There's been one before?

\* According to Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, the meaning of the word 'Mormon' is 'more good.'

Hm. Nes

# Sunday Mornings

Had the music more of mystery  
More than memory and of dreams  
Had my feathers not so swiftly  
Fallen, swiftly from my wings  
Had we further run and fever  
Less than love constrained our souls  
Had I heard you when you first spoke  
Had I known you panned for gold  
Then perhaps your heart would still beat  
At the mention of my name  
And perhaps my feet would still move  
In directions more the same  
Sunday mornings! Ah, the best time  
Sunday mornings call for peace  
And I find my rest in the soft glow  
Of the music's sweet release

Hm. Nes

# Sunrise Beauty

Rises the sun  
And my eyes strain to see  
The mountain peaks  
Such brilliant majesty  
Revealed

As well, my heart does near bow down  
Bow down to the sun  
Bow down to the mountains  
Bow down to her majestic peaks  
Disrobed

Although, I know full well that  
The sun did not raise itself  
Nor the mountain build itself  
Nor clothe itself  
Not this day

Careful my heart  
Do check yourself, oh troubled soul  
For there is one whom you cannot see  
One who formed such beauty  
Bow down to him

Close your eyes  
And bow to him

Hm. Nes

# Superstar

Touted to be something more than  
You could possibly be  
More than you are  
More, always more  
But for whom and for what  
And who cares?  
You. You care  
And I care  
Truth is, we all care  
But then we care too much  
Or we care about too much  
And then we get hurt,  
And we hurt too much to care.

Hm. Nes

# Synesthesia

I see the sleigh bells dancing  
Raspberry-colored on the snow;  
While others only sense their jingled voice,  
And marvel at the magic:  
How my ears can hear them so,  
As well my eyes perceive the bells rejoice.

The cello's somber song in  
Hues of yellow gold I see  
Like honey dripping thick from honey comb.  
As sky blue clouds waft heav'nward,  
Blending each piano key  
In colors rich but hid as by a gnome.

Not only do I hear each  
Do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti,  
I also see them dance in streams of light:  
The colors of the rainbow  
Joined in one great symphony  
Of synesthetic wonder and delight.

Hm. Nes

# The Best Part Of My Day And All My Night

Morning light arouses eager longings each day new.  
I rise; yet your arms grasp and hold me tight,  
Lingering in the stillness of our happy rendezvous-  
The best part of my day and all my night.

Parting isn't easy, but I manage to endure  
With thoughts of you: the memories ignite  
Desires that keep on growing ever stronger because you're  
The best part of my day and all my night.

Hm. Nes

# The Gentleman And The Lady

the gentleman smiles, but  
the lady does not.  
does she not notice him?  
he, unaccustomed to being unnoticed  
and she, as beautiful as wild daffodils  
on a dozen rolling hills.  
he smiles again  
his best smile  
a smile that melts most.  
does she still not see him?  
perhaps she is not alone and is  
trying harder  
than most  
to resist his magnetic charm.  
he must turn it up  
a notch  
move closer  
say something  
"Hello, " the gentleman says.  
the lady feels a brush against her leg  
a low growl  
"Sit Sonny. Sit, " she says.  
Sonny sits.  
"Hello, " the lady says  
smiling awkwardly,  
but the gentleman does not hear her:  
he is gone.

Hm. Nes

# The Howler

I told the boys you'd be there when I came home late, late last night.  
I even bragged you'd wake, smile and greet me with a kiss  
There wouldn't be a fight.  
So, I was shocked when I came through the door  
And you were there no more.  
All that remained of you was the howler you left for me on the floor.

And it said:

'I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE WITH YOU IF YOU WERE THE LAST MAN  
'THAT EXISTED ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH!  
'I'VE GONE BACK HOME TO MOMMA, SO DON'T CALL! DON'T WRITE!  
'DON'T E-MAIL! DON'T TEXT MESSAGE! YOU'RE THE WORLD'S BIGGEST JERK! '

I'm sure you told your momma about that howler the night you left,  
The last words that I'll ever hear, because now I'm completely deaf.  
And someday when we reconcile and you whisper in my ear,  
I'll have to say: 'Eh? I can't hear a thing. Remember the howler dear? '

When you said:

'I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE WITH YOU IF YOU WERE THE LAST MAN  
'THAT EXISTED ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH!  
'I'VE GONE BACK HOME TO MOMMA, SO DON'T CALL! DON'T WRITE!  
'DON'T E-MAIL! DON'T TEXT MESSAGE! YOU'RE THE WORLD'S BIGGEST JERK! '

At first I thought I'd write a howler, with harsh words of my own,  
A howler that would be much louder, to make my point, drive it home!  
Instead, I've written this simple song, to say I need you so!  
The boys, I don't need, but if you leave, where you go, I'll go.

Though you said:

'I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE WITH YOU IF YOU WERE THE LAST MAN  
'THAT EXISTED ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH!  
'I'VE GONE BACK HOME TO MOMMA, SO DON'T CALL! DON'T WRITE!  
'DON'T E-MAIL! DON'T TEXT MESSAGE! YOU'RE THE WORLD'S BIGGEST JERK! '

Hm. Nes

# The Light Of Day Revives The Soul

The light of day revives the soul  
From slumber's stranglehold,  
At last to venture from the well  
Where darkness, thick and cold,  
Determined naught would be the tale  
Of nothing never told,  
Until the veil of darkness fell  
And life rejoined the soul.

Hm. Nes

# The Mountains Rise Up

The mountains rise up to protect us  
From our enemies all around.  
They gather snow from passing clouds,  
Turn it to water and send it down.

They birth the deer, the fox, the bear  
For us to hunt and then to wear.  
The mountains are our friends, my son.  
A mighty God has placed them there.

Hm. Nes

# The Order Of The Blooms

Winter's blanket falls slightly askew for one brief moment and  
Spring explodes to life from frozen catacombs deep in the earth.  
Tulips rise first, strutting proudly, splashing color on the snow.  
Daffodils follow, delicately but more tenaciously.  
Lilacs rule the earth, though briefly, as winter's reign is broken.  
Columbine surprise us with where they may rise and cast their blooms.  
Irises, stately and most fragrant of the flower kingdom...  
Peonies, their close rival, and determined to outlast them...  
Roses, ah the roses. Yes, the roses will sustain us now.  
Daisies ask so little of us, and yet, they are the summer.  
Tiger Lilies, I thought you were going to sleep through to July.  
Asters, green, green, green and then, finally... you are my first love.

Hm. Nes

# The Place I Best Remember

When I come  
to the place I  
best remember,  
I remember the  
shadows cast on  
barren walls,  
venetian blinds  
hanging gotch-eyed.  
I can still hear the  
muffled moans and  
floorboards creaking  
as I shift my weight  
from one foot  
to the other. And  
I remember  
the fear of being  
heard; so I stand  
statuesque and  
let the shadows pass  
across my pallid face  
until darkness  
consumes  
the whole world.

Hm. Nes

# The Poetry Of Basketball

All alone in the gym tonight-  
Too early I guess for a game.  
But the smells are here,  
And in the silence I can even hear the sounds-  
The shouts, the squeak of shoes on the floor.  
Then the guys start to come-  
One, two, three at a time.  
One, three, six, seven, ten-  
We've got ten; let's shoot for teams.  
I'll guard the guy with the 'Bulls' shirt;  
Who does he think he is, Michael Jordan?  
I'm Michael Jordan.  
And so we begin:  
The dribble, the steal, the pass, the shot,  
The rebound, the put back, the foul.  
And over and over and over again-  
Every time different, but each time the same.  
I love the poetry of the game.

Hm. Nes

# The Problem With Soccer (World Cup 2010)

The problem with soccer is there are no time outs.  
When my two-year-old pitches a fit,  
throwing himself on the ground,  
screaming and flailing all around,  
He gets a time out.  
When he tattles on his sister for doing something he did,  
He gets a time out.  
When he kicks his sister because: 'She kicked me first! '  
and then refuses to shake and make up,  
He gets a time out.  
When he cheats,  
He gets a time out.  
When he pouts,  
He gets a time out.  
When he won't do his chores because he's upset,  
He gets a time out.  
And sometimes, when he's really bad, he gets spanked;  
But getting spanked doesn't always seem to help.  
(Ask the French.)

Hm. Nes

# The Real McCoy

The real McCoy, some say, was Bill, a shipbuilder by trade,  
Who joined the ranks of rum runners that prohibition made.  
'Real rum-' he boasted, 'not like them who water down their booze.'  
So drink to Captain Bill, the real McCoy, and all his crews.  
It's cheers for Captain Bill! The 'Real McCoy' is his good booze.

But Texans claim the real McCoy went by the name of Joe  
And drove his longhorn cattle all the way to Chicago  
From Abilene in Texas where they'll brand you a 'true cowboy'  
If you poke two million head of cows, like Joseph 'Cowboy' McCoy.  
He poked two million head of cows, 'Ol Joe the real McCoy.

And there's a boxer, 'Kid' McCoy, whose momma named him Norm.  
His corkscrew punch was legend and his fists flew like a storm.  
The wannabes would use his name and steal his classic moves;  
So Kid was billed 'The Real McCoy' in all the ticket booths.  
The real McCoy is Kid McCoy, so say the billing booths.

Elijah was a real McCoy, the son of runaways  
Who fled as slaves to Canada with genius child to raise.  
In Edinburgh, Elijah learned his engineering skills,  
Inventing useful systems that lube locomotives still.  
Elijah is the real McCoy whose genius lingers still.

Most ancient of the real McCoy's is Scotland's Reay MacKay.  
'A drappie o' the real MacKay' is bona fide they say.  
When every article is drawn, the one that's genuine  
Is whiskey Reay MacKay does raise and proudly boast, 'Tis mine.'  
The 'Real McCoy' is Reay MacKay's; yes, it's the genuine.

Hm. Nes

# The Road To Chancellorsville

The road that leads to Chancellorsville  
Is a winding road.  
I took it once.  
My horse and I were merely going for a ride,  
Wherever the road would lead us.  
That's when I saw the wounded soldier  
Lying beside the road,  
Almost dead,  
All alone.  
I nudged him, but he didn't move.  
I spoke to him, but he didn't reply.  
He simply opened his eyes  
For one brief moment  
And looked at me;  
Then he closed his eyes again  
And died.  
It was as if he was waiting for someone to come,  
As if he didn't want to die alone.  
I was in no hurry, with no place to go,  
So I buried him there  
Beside the road,  
The winding road that leads to Chancellorsville;  
But I didn't go.  
I didn't go to Chancellorsville.  
Instead, I turned my horse back toward home.

Hm. Nes

# The South Fork Boys And Their Dam

The boys of South Fork Country Club  
Raise glasses to their health  
And laud the speech of Carnegie,  
His grand gospel of wealth.

Then breaks the dam and floods the homes  
Of Johnstown's humbler ranks.  
Two thousand and two hundred nine  
Lie dead upon the banks.

The South Fork Fishing-Hunting Club,  
A guilty brood of rooks,  
Hear solace from ole Carnegie,  
The patron saint of books:

'Our dam is breached, but who'll dare blame  
'The fishing-hunting guild?  
'Two thousand and FIVE hundred nine  
'Libraries we shall build! '

Hm. Nes

# The Story Of A Leaf

Once, and not so long ago,  
I was a brilliant leaf  
A true specimen of beauty  
Lofty, intricately formed  
Delicately swaying in the breeze  
On display for all to see  
Children would stop and stare, saying  
'Look at the color! '  
'Look at him go! '  
Fluttering with the wind  
Bending, free as a bird

But then I fell; I fell in the fall  
And though I struggled to stay above the pile  
Soon I was smothered, trampled  
Now I'm all but unrecognizable  
Blackened from the mold, melded into the mesh and mush  
In a colorless pile of decaying waste  
Good for nothing  
Completely forgotten

Like an injured super star  
A voiceless singer  
A tarnished preacher  
An unseated politician  
A childless mother  
A retired teacher  
A wounded soldier, home at last from an unpopular war

And then the gardener comes  
His whimsical grin assuring me that  
I am somehow valuable to him  
Though he slays me completely  
And my life, with all its broken bits  
Becomes part of the mixed up mess  
Nutrients for the new-formed leaves  
Those who have taken my place  
In the high, honored bough I once claimed as my own.



# The Tale Of William Tell

The arrow flew, but none could tell  
If apple pierced or humble son,  
Until one or the other fell-  
Determined contest lost or won.  
The dart flew like a bat from hell  
Toward Walter, son of William Tell.

Sir William Tell refused to bow  
Before the lords who ruled the land.  
And hated they his stubborn prow,  
But feared the crossbow in his hand.  
'He must be forced to bend somehow! '  
So swore they all with solemn vow.

And then: 'A contest we shall call!  
'Let William shoot his famous bow  
'At distance great and target small,  
'And so by doing he can show  
'He need not bow nor ever fall  
'Upon his face before us all.'

At last a target did unveil:  
An apple at one hundred yards.  
But William's face grew ghastly pale.  
He ne'er suspected such dark cards:  
The apple sat on Walter Tell,  
The humble son of William Tell.

And fixed the arrow for its flight-  
'No need to shoot; just simply bow, '  
Said lords who thought they'd won the fight  
Against Sir William Tell who now  
Should slay his only son; but right  
Prevails against the darkest night.

The arrow flew, but none could tell  
If apple pierced or humble son  
Until one or the other fell-  
Determined contest lost or won.

The dart flew like a bat from hell  
Toward Walter, son of William Tell.

The apple split with such a force-  
No trace of apple could be found.  
But all the country changed its course-  
No longer serfs to lords were bound.  
And freedom rose upon the shores  
Because Sir William refused the lords.

Hm. Nes

# This Languid Heart

This languid heart that feared to face the day  
Is sobered by the swiftness of your love-  
Such brisk, delightful movements on display  
For all the world to see; but only I  
Can draw you close to feel the pulsing flow  
Of sweet determination for the tasks  
That once gave pause, but now hold little threat  
With you beside me marching to the fray.  
Each day awakens to the truth that I  
Am not alone in this celestial brawl  
That threatens all of life- the fore and aft  
Of our existence- things that are and known.  
And yet there's more, but who can hope to find  
With borrowed compass- broken, unreturned.  
One truth I cling to, and will not let go-  
My languid heart knows nothing more than this:  
If you should stop the movements of your love,  
The brisk display of pleasure in my being,  
This languid heart would know not else to do  
Than stop as well and beat no more for you.

Hm. Nes

# Time

The mornings dawn,  
The seasons change,  
And years pass by  
One after one  
As lives dissolve into the span of time.

The old man knows  
To count each day  
And ne'er neglect  
One setting sun  
Lest he should disappear and miss the last;

Unlike the child  
Who seldom notes  
The changing moons  
And passing time-  
The days that he will never see again.

Teach me to count,  
To cherish time,  
Before I'm old  
And days are lost  
To rocking chairs that rick-rock with the clock.

Hm. Nes

# Too Late The Cello Sang

'Too late, ' the cello sang.  
In misty stillness mourned the twilight-  
Thomas Caster Abernathy took his life.

For weeks he wandered, truly wondering  
How to find himself in Carnforth  
After Bessie stole his heart and won the grave.  
No children shared their journey;  
Not a friend had gathered to him.  
She the only one to ever sing his name,  
And played the cello as she sang it.  
Waltzed his heart, though legs stayed sober-  
Thomas Caster Abernathy loved her true.

The city sank into a slumber,  
None to hear his labored sobbing-  
Longing, praying, begging God to hear his voice.  
Then the bridge, so high above-  
The river churning far below-  
And once again for Bessie, Thomas prayed.

Too late the cello sang  
In misty stillness of the twilight-  
Thomas Caster Abernathy joined his wife.

Hm. Nes

# Too Many Miles To Cross

A calloused heart does hurt much less,  
And lonely days are few  
For a heart that beats but never breaks  
From an absence it never knew.

'Tis easier sure to feel no pain  
Nor tears from the growing loss  
Of words not heard nor kisses felt-  
Too many miles to cross.

Yet come the tears and aches that burn  
From a distance forced upon;  
While closeness grows in tender hearts  
Kept apart for oh so long.

Hm. Nes

# Twenty-Nine Thousand Four Hundred Seven Sunsets

Twenty-nine thousand four hundred seven sunsets  
With one same sun on the one same sea.

In the early days by my mother's side,  
Though she'd often tell me of the sun and of the sea,  
I seldom watched, and never for long,  
The slow dissolve,  
The melt and plunge,  
Now you see it, now you don't-  
So many sunsets lost.

Twenty-nine thousand four hundred seven sunsets  
With one same sun on the one same sea.

The years of my youth were marked by friends and sport,  
Often whole days on the beach-  
Raging winds and mammoth waves  
Or a still, glass sea, not a cloud in the sky,  
And every shade in between.  
I rarely fathomed the myriad shapes and colors,  
An ever-changing landscape-  
So very many sunsets lost.

Twenty-nine thousand four hundred seven sunsets  
With one same sun on the one same sea.

The middle-aged years pinned me to my work;  
Yet through a window from time to time,  
Or on holiday, if I risked the break,  
I'd notice how lovely a sunset could be-  
So very many sunsets lost forever.

Twenty-nine thousand four hundred seven sunsets  
With one same sun on the one same sea.

At last, in these final days, each sunset is anticipated, craved.  
Regardless the mood of the sea, it will receive the sun.  
No matter the face of the sky, it will let go the same.  
The sun itself, always churning, always burning,

Swells with new brilliance, new radiance and splendor  
Each time it approaches the sea,  
Then morphs into a molten pool on the sea's surface  
Before plunging from view-  
Never more a sunset lost.

Twenty-nine thousand four hundred seven sunsets  
With one same sun on the one same sea.

Then one glorious day,  
The day of my twenty-nine thousand four hundred and sixth sunset,  
And I at my usual place along the shore,  
Saw the sun rise out of the sea from where it had just set!  
The sun rose back up into the sky, and  
In the very next moment on the very same day, it set again.  
I experienced my twenty-nine thousand four hundred and seventh sunset,  
The second in one day!  
Oh glorious day!  
A sunset gained.

Twenty-nine thousand four hundred seven sunsets  
With one same sun on the one same sea.

(In 2 Kings 20: 9-11 the Lord made the shadow go back 10 steps. Certainly, at that exact moment, somewhere in the world, someone saw the sun dissolve on the horizon and then rise again.)

Hm. Nes

# Two Soldiers, Two Sisters Each

So proud we stood,  
My sister, Marge, and me-  
Our brother, Bruce,  
As he was meant to be-  
And who'd of thought?  
Our country 'tis of thee,  
Sweet land of liberty,  
Of thee we sing, and send  
Our brother, Bruce.

While over there,  
Somewhere across the sea,  
Two other fools,  
With brother proud to be-  
And he so brave,  
To save his family  
And keep his country free-  
His death for liberty-  
Wears soldier clothes.

Our brother, Bruce,  
Will meet his destiny.  
Their brother too,  
As he was meant to be,  
Will take a life,  
Protecting liberty-  
That Bruce again won't see  
His sisters proud that he  
Wore soldier clothes.

Hm. Nes

## Unrequited, More Or Less

When she found me, I was not as I would have liked to be found,  
Nor where,  
Not wearing my best  
As I would have liked;  
And yet, she seemed to be less than put out with me,  
Possibly even pleased.  
It was an unexpected and easy way to deal with what could have otherwise been

A mess.  
I relaxed.  
She made me feel comfortable and not as awkward as the word sounds,  
(Awkward is an odd word and I don't like to feel it,  
Especially around her.)  
But she displaced my oddities and awkwardness  
With stuff of herself- like fragrance,  
And lace,  
And humming.  
She liked to hum, and noticed me while she did it.  
I wanted to hum along with her, but I feared that it would make her stop.  
Instead, I closed my eyes and started to sway  
With the music,  
Until the swaying took me away,  
Far away,  
To another world where she refused to go,  
But I didn't want to go away,  
Not without her.  
I tried to stop myself from swaying,  
To open my eyes,  
But I couldn't.  
Now I fear that I will never hear her humming again,  
And I feel awkward.

Hm. Nes

# Virgil Lied

Virgil swore he'd never open  
Marge's chest where letters kept-  
Secrets stored from all her years of life.  
But Virgil lied, now Marge was dead-  
Virgil opened, broke the lock and opened, Marge's chest  
And found there one short note which read:  
Dearest Virgil,  
This is all I ever wrote.  
Yours always,  
Marge

Hm. Nes

# War

cold and huddled,  
lacking courage,  
hungry- most of all just hungry,  
fearing fever,  
thinking of mother, that  
likely she filled a pot with stew.

why the fighting?  
why the danger?  
why the death? such brutal war!  
digging trenches,  
thinking of mother, that  
likely she filled a pot with stew.

Hm. Nes

## What Will Become Of Her Now?

What will become of her now,  
Now that her lover has gone,  
Gone to the land of the brave and the free-  
Free, but from who and from what?

What does he think he will find?  
Find all that is and is not-  
Not worth his leaving the things once held dear-  
Dear more than life, Sir, that's what.

What will she say when he comes,  
Comes back before he has gone,  
Gone to the land of the free and the brave-  
Brave, but for who knows what?

Hm. Nes

# When The Kings Went To War

When the kings went to war  
Went to war  
Went to war  
When the kings went to war  
I stayed home.

Now the kings have returned  
Some have died  
Most alive  
Now the kings have returned  
And I'm alone.

Who to tell  
How to say  
All that happened in the days  
When the kings went to war  
While I stayed home.

Oh the battles  
Oh the hell  
Not of war but worse  
The well-kept secrets crying  
To be known.

Knocks the door  
Comes before  
Nathan knows and he will tell  
How the king failed to war  
When he stayed home.

When the kings went to war  
Went to war  
Went to war  
When the kings went to war  
I stayed home.

Hm. Nes

# Who Wants To Be Burned?

My father warned me.

Mother warned me.

My neighbor, Gilbert Jeffrey Swain, often warned me.

(Gilbert is fourteen and knows these things.)

'The brazier is hot, too hot to touch!

'Don't touch the brazier if'n you don't want to be burned! '

And who wants to be burned?

My father was burned.

Mother was burned.

Gilbert Jeffrey Swain was burned six times.

(Gilbert has experience with these things.)

The brazier was hot, too hot to touch,

But I touched it anyway.

I touched it twice, and then a third time.

My father was right.

Mother was right.

Gilbert Jeffrey Swain was definitely right.

(Gilbert shared more details than did my father or mother.)

The brazier is hot, really, really hot. I'm telling you myself.

You shouldn't touch it if'n you don't want to be burned!

And who wants to be burned?

Hm. Nes

# Winter Surprise

The earth gave quite a surprise this morning  
In a fresh new dress of snow she'd donned.  
Not quite the warm garb I would choose  
For this chilly winter's day,  
Though ideal for children's play.  
But me? I'll roll and hit the snooze.  
The weekend plans to clean up the lawn  
Can wait until the warmer days of spring.

Hm. Nes

## Words By Cassie Burnall And Paul

We don't preach ourselves, for we are his ambassadors.  
The power's not from us; it comes from him.  
We are not at home in this body, in this world,  
And we will make our goal to please him.

Now I have given up on everything else.  
I have found the only way  
Is to know Christ and experience  
The power that raised him from the grave.

I want to know the power that brought Christ back to life.  
I want to suffer with him, and to die.  
I want to live in fresh newness of life,  
Of those alive from the dead.

Hm. Nes

# You And I, And The Cat

we shared a cup of coffee- you and I,  
as the cat looked on.  
you had two lumps of sugar, a shot of cream.  
mine was black.  
I thought to offer cream to the cat; he'd like that.  
and then you smiled.  
you peered across the rim of your upraised cup, taking a sip,  
scrunching your face and smiling through the steam as it  
rose from your milky, sweet coffee,  
and I forgot about the cat.  
he purred.  
quickly, I put him outside,  
knowing his familiar purr, a purr that soon  
would escalate into a full-blown howl  
that demanded my attention and some cream.  
I wanted only to savor the contented sweetness of your face,  
perfectly formed for my delight, but  
you felt sorry for the cat.  
I had been abrupt, insensitive.  
"Why can't the cat be allowed to purr, even to howl  
"if he wants? ' you said.  
"Why must the cat be refused a simple request for attention  
"and a sip of milk? "  
alright then, I'll let the cat back inside,  
and give him some milk.  
are you happy now?  
no answer.  
the coffee has grown tepid,  
along with your smile.  
I loathe that cat.

Hm. Nes

# You Can'T Trust A Nigger With A Gun

The graves we dug in the pourin' rain  
With enemy fire still a comin' down.  
The mud so deep, feared I might be drowned  
And laid 'side them who was done with pain.

And the thunder rolled,  
And a baby cried,  
And a soldier cried,  
But I's feelin' bold.

Said: 'Yanks I'll shoot jus' cause they's down here.'  
'Cept muskets warent meant for colored men  
Who's fit to dig but not to dig in-  
To save our homes, all that we hold dear.

And the thunder rolled,  
And a baby cried,  
And a soldier cried,  
But I's feelin' bold.

A gun I grabs from the Union dead;  
'Twas loaded and cocked and good to fire.  
I's aimed and fixin' to vent my ire  
When a bullet exploded in my head.

And the voice of a Reb who knew me said:  
'You can't trust a nigger with a gun;  
'For sure, he'll shoot his Massah and run.'

And the thunder rolled,  
And a baby cried,  
And a soldier cried,  
And so's I died.

Hm. Nes