

I Am!

BY JOHN CLARE

I am—yet what I am none cares or knows;

My friends forsake me like a memory lost:

I am the self-consumer of my woes—

They rise and vanish in oblivious host,

Like shadows in love's frenzied stifled throes

And yet I am, and live—like vapours tossed

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,

Into the living sea of waking dreams,

Where there is neither sense of life or joys,

But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;

Even the dearest that I loved the best

Are strange—nay, rather, stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man hath never trod

A place where woman never smiled or wept

There to abide with my Creator, God,

And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,

Untroubling and untroubled where I lie

The grass below—above the vaulted sky.

A Psalm of Life

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

What The Heart Of The Young Man Said
To The Psalmist.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.
In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,

Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,— act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

Brahma

BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
I am the hymn the Brahmin sings.
The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

In misty blue

by Robert Laurence Binyon

In misty blue the lark is heard
Above the silent homes of men;
The bright-eyed thrush, the little wren,
The yellow-billed sweet-voiced
blackbird
Mid fallow blossoms blond as curd
Or silver oak boughs, carolling
With happy throat from tree to tree,
Sing into light this morn of spring
That sang my dear love home to me.
Be starry, buds of clustered white,
Around the dark waves of her hair!
The young fresh glory you prepare
Is like my ever-fresh delight
When she comes shining on my sight
With meeting eyes, with such a cheek
As colours fair like flushing tips
Of shoots, and music ere she speak
Are hill and cloud and flower and tree--
A splendour that is hers and spring's,--
The day my love came home to me.

Lies in the wonder of her lips.
Airs of the morning, breathe about
Keen faint scents of the wild wood--side
From thickets where primroses hide
Mid the brown leaves of winter's rout.
Chestnut and willow, beacon out
For joy of her, from far and nigh,
Your English green on English hills:
Above her head, song--quivering sky,
And at her feet, the daffodils.
Because she breathed, the world was
more,
And breath a finer soul to use,
And life held lovelier hopes to choose:
But O to--day my heart brims o'er,
Earth glows as from a kindled core,
Like shadows of diviner things

Dover Beach

by Matthew Arnold

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast
the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of
England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the
tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the
night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the
moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back,
and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and
bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Agean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round
earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle
furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges
drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which
seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor
light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for
pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of
struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.