

## Winter Poetry

### Looking for a Sunset Bird in Winter by Robert Frost

The west was getting out of gold,  
The breath of air had died of cold,  
When shoeing home across the white,  
I thought I saw a bird alight.

In summer when I passed the place  
I had to stop and lift my face;  
A bird with an angelic gift  
Was singing in it sweet and swift.

No bird was singing in it now.  
A single leaf was on a bough,  
And that was all there was to see  
In going twice around the tree.

From my advantage on a hill  
I judged that such a crystal chill  
Was only adding frost to snow  
As gilt to gold that wouldn't show.

A brush had left a crooked stroke  
Of what was either cloud or smoke  
From north to south across the blue;  
A piercing little star was through.



## To a Locomotive in Winter

by Walt Whitman

THEE for my recitative!

Thee in the driving storm, even as now—the snow—the winter-day declining;

Thee in thy panoply, thy measured dual throbbing, and thy beat convulsive;

Thy black cylindric body, golden brass, and silvery steel;

Thy ponderous side-bars, parallel and connecting rods, gyrating, shuttling at thy sides;

Thy metrical, now swelling pant and roar—now tapering in the distance;

Thy great protruding head-light, fix'd in front;

Thy long, pale, floating vapor-pennants, tinged with delicate purple;

The dense and murky clouds out-belching from thy smoke-stack;

Thy knitted frame—thy springs and valves—the tremulous twinkle of thy wheels;

Thy train of cars behind, obedient, merrily-following,

Through gale or calm, now swift, now slack, yet steadily careering:

Type of the modern! emblem of motion and power! pulse of the continent!

For once, come serve the Muse, and merge in verse, even as here I see thee,

With storm, and buffeting gusts of wind, and falling snow;

By day, thy warning, ringing bell to sound its notes,

By night, thy silent signal lamps to swing.



Fierce-throated beauty!

Roll through my chant, with all thy lawless music! thy swinging lamps at night;

Thy piercing, madly-whistled laughter! thy echoes, rumbling like an earthquake,  
rousing

all!

Law of thyself complete, thine own track firmly holding;

(No sweetness debonair of tearful harp or glib piano thine,)

Thy trills of shrieks by rocks and hills return'd,

Launch'd o'er the prairies wide—across the lakes,

To the free skies, unpent, and glad, and strong.

Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind  
by William Shakespeare

Blow, blow, thou winter wind

Thou art not so unkind

As man's ingratitude;

Thy tooth is not so keen,

Because thou art not seen,

Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:

Most freindship if feigning, most loving mere folly:

Then heigh-ho, the holly!

This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze thou bitter sky,

That does not bite so nigh

As benefits forgot:

Though thou the waters warp,

Thy sting is not so sharp

As a friend remembered not.

Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:

Most friendship if feigning, most loving mere folly:

Then heigh-ho, the holly!

This life is most jolly.



**Winter Trees**

by William Carlos Williams

All the complicated details  
of the attiring and  
the disattiring are completed!

A liquid moon  
moves gently among  
the long branches.

Thus having prepared their buds  
against a sure winter  
the wise trees  
stand sleeping in the cold.



## Winter

by William Shakespeare

When icicles hang by the wall  
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail  
And Tom bears logs into the hall,  
And milk comes frozen home in pail,  
When Blood is nipped and ways be foul,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
Tu-whit, tu-who: a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.  
When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,  
And birds sit brooding in the snow,  
And Marian's nose looks red and raw  
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
Tu-whit, tu-who: a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.



## After the Winter

by Claude McKay

Some day, when trees have shed their leaves  
And against the morning's white  
The shivering birds beneath the eaves  
Have sheltered for the night,  
We'll turn our faces southward, love,  
Toward the summer isle  
Where bamboos spire to shafted grove  
And wide-mouthed orchids smile.



And we will seek the quiet hill  
Where towers the cotton tree,  
And leaps the laughing crystal rill,  
And works the droning bee.  
And we will build a cottage there  
Beside an open glade,  
With black-ribbed blue-bells blowing near,  
And ferns that never fade.



**To Flowers From Italy in Winter**  
by Thomas Hardy

Sunned in the South, and here to-day;  
--If all organic things  
Be sentient, Flowers, as some men say,  
What are your ponderings?

How can you stay, nor vanish quite  
From this bleak spot of thorn,  
And birch, and fir, and frozen white  
Expanse of the forlorn?

Frail luckless exiles hither brought!  
Your dust will not regain  
Old sunny haunts of Classic thought  
When you shall waste and wane;

But mix with alien earth, be lit  
With frigid Boreal flame,  
And not a sign remain in it  
To tell men whence you came.

## Winter

by Walter de la Mare

Clouded with snow  
The cold winds blow,  
And shrill on leafless bough  
The robin with its burning breast  
Alone sings now.

The rayless sun,  
Day's journey done,  
Sheds its last ebbing light  
On fields in leagues of beauty spread  
Unearthly white.

Thick draws the dark,  
And spark by spark,  
The frost-fires kindle, and soon  
Over that sea of frozen foam  
Floats the white moon.



## Winter-Time

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Late lies the wintry sun a-  
bed, A frosty, fiery sleepy-  
head;

Blinks but an hour or two; and then,  
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies,  
At morning in the dark I rise;  
And shivering in my nakedness,  
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.



Close by the jolly fire I sit  
To warm my frozen bones a bit;  
Or with a reindeer-sled, explore  
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap  
Me in my comforter and cap;  
The cold wind burns my face, and blows  
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;  
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;  
And tree and house, and hill and lake,  
Are frosted like a wedding cake.



### **Blue Winter**

by Robert Francis

Winter uses all the blues there are.  
One shade of blue for water, one for ice,  
Another blue for shadows over snow.  
The clear or cloudy sky uses blue twice-  
Both different blues. And hills row after row  
Are colored blue according to how far.  
You know the blue jay's double-blur device  
Shows best when there are no green leaves to show.  
And Sirius is a winter blue-green star.