

A BLESSING FROM MY SIXTEEN YEARS' SON

By Mary Karr Submitted by Sarah Walters, English Teacher, HHS

I have this son who assembled inside me
during Hurricane Gloria. In a flash, he appeared,
in a heartbeat. Outside, pines toppled.

Phone lines snapped and hissed like cobras.
Inside, he was a raw pearl: microscopic, luminous.
Look at the muscled obelisk of him now

Pawing through the icebox for more grapes.
Sixteen years and not a bone broken,
not a single stitch. By his age,

I was marked more ways, and small.
He's a slouching six foot three,
with implausible blue eyes, which settle

on the pages of Emerson's "Self-Reliance"
with profound belligerence.
A girl with a naval ring

could make his cell phone go *brr*
or an Afro-d boy leaning on a mop at Taco Bell –
creatures strange as dragons or eels.

Balanced on a kitchen stool, each gives counsel
arcane as any oracle's. Bruce claims school
is *harshing my mellow*. Case longs to date

a tattooed girl, because he wants a woman
willing to do stuff she'll regret.
They've come to lead my son.

into his broadening spiral.
Someday soon, the tether
will snap. I birthed my own mom

into oblivion. The night my son smashed
the car fender, then rode home
in the rain-streaked cop car, he asked, *Did you*

and Dad screw up much?

He'd let me tuck him in,
my grandmother's wedding quilt

from 1912 drawn to his goateed chin. *Don't
blame us*, I said. *You're your own
idiot now*. At which he grinned.

The cop said the girl in the crimped Chevy
took it hard. He'd found my son
awkwardly holding her in the canted headlights,

where he'd draped his own coat
over her shaking shoulders. *My fault*,
he'd confessed right off.

Nice kid, said the cop.

I liked this poem the first time I read it a year or two ago. This poem captures the relationship I hope to have with my child some day, one where parental protection and worry is combined with humor and openness. There's a sort of observant reverence this mother has for her son. She watches him as he rummages through the fridge, reads Emerson, and pines for a girl with a belly ring. There's a true affection present in this poem that's neither sappy nor overdone. And I love the images from the night of the car crash of a boy who not only drapes his coat protectively around a scared girl but who also lets his mother tuck him in.

At the Grand Café

By Lee Schlesinger

Submitted by Josh Blum, English Teacher, HHS

I didn't see the muffins until I had already ordered
French Toast, which was after all an excellent choice,
It was thick, the bread fresh, and it held
The syrup chastely on its crisp surface. The muffins
Were in a case near the counter. The menu
Said nothing of them - perhaps it said, Baked Goods,
Or even Muffins, but that told nothing - how was one to know?
Of course, they were appealing in the ways
Pastries always are, but the best was the idea of it,
Peach-corn, luxurious confection, unsuspectable, provocative.

But I had already ordered, though no doubt
It was not too late to change my order
Or add the muffins to it - but why bother?
To change would leave the same regret, now
For French Toast, not muffin; and to add would be
Merely an evasion - one must choose, and choosing,
Must exclude; anyway, I didn't want so much to eat.

I did enjoy the French Toast. As we were finishing breakfast,
Another couple came in, and I thought to jump up
As they got comfortable at their table and say: There is so much
To choose from, look at the muffins in the case,
Read the menu minutely - that vague and trivial hunger
You casually brought in with you this morning, examine it,
Heed it, for what do you hunger this morning,
Ask yourself again, for what do you hunger?

There are so many things I love about the poem - the image it offers of the leisure and luxury of being out for breakfast; the surprising language with which it presents the crispy French Toast and the mysterious, alluring muffins; the familiarity of the experience it recalls of having so many options, of wanting so much, yet knowing that no matter what I choose or how full I may be in the end, I won't feel completely satisfied. The poem presents this dilemma -about ordering breakfast, about the seemingly endless choices available to us elsewhere- with humor and grace and precision, and I find myself haunted by the question that it poses in its final two lines. Although it's not always (ever?) easy to name exactly what it is that I "hunger for," I know that great poems, including "At the Grand Café," rarely fail to leave me feeling satisfied.

CHICAGO

By Carl Sandburg

Submitted by Adam Fennel, Health and Phys. Ed. Chair, HHS

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:
They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I
have seen your painted women under the gas lamps
luring the farm boys.
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it
is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to
kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the
faces of women and children I have seen the marks
of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who
sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer
and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing
so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on
job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the
little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning
as a savage pitted against the wilderness,
Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with
white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young
man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has
never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse,
and under his ribs the heart of the people,
Laughing!
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of
Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog
Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with
Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

One of my favorite poems is "Chicago" by Carl Sandburg. Having a son live in Chicago, Sandburg's description of the city allows me to view the city in a more animated light. "the fog rolls in on pussycat paws" is my favorite line.

George Gray

By Edgar Lee Masters Submitted by Greg Smith, Social Studies Teacher & HASP Director, HHS

I have studied many times
The marble which was chiseled for me --
A boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor.
In truth it pictures not my destination
But my life.
For love was offered me and I shrank from its disillusionment;
Sorrow knocked at my door, but I was afraid;
Ambition called to me, but I dreaded the chances.
Yet all the while I hungered for meaning in my life.
And now I know that we must lift the sail
And catch the winds of destiny
Wherever they drive the boat.
To put meaning in one's life may end in madness,
But life without meaning is the torture
Of restlessness and vague desire --
It is a boat longing for the sea and yet afraid.

This is a poem I read in High School and carried around in my wallet for about 10 years after I read it. I frequently re-read it at times, although I knew it by heart. I have garnered inspiration from it as I believe it helped to teach me what the important things are in life and how I don't want to end up like Gray, looking back on a life of regret. Interestingly, the poem has taken on different meaning at different points in my life and still find it powerful in so many ways.

In Praise of Limestone

By W.H. Auden

Submitted by John Buchanan, Social Studies Teacher, HHS

If it form the one landscape that we, the inconstant ones,
Are consistently homesick for, this is chiefly
Because it dissolves in water. Mark these rounded slopes
With their surface fragrance of thyme and, beneath,
A secret system of caves and conduits; hear the springs
That spurt out everywhere with a chuckle,
Each filling a private pool for its fish and carving
Its own little ravine whose cliffs entertain
The butterfly and the lizard; examine this region
Of short distances and definite places:
What could be more like Mother or a fitter background
For her son, the flirtatious male who lounges
Against a rock in the sunlight, never doubting
That for all his faults he is loved; whose works are but
Extensions of his power to charm? From weathered outcrop
To hill-top temple, from appearing waters to
Conspicuous fountains, from a wild to a formal vineyard,
Are ingenious but short steps that a child's wish
To receive more attention than his brothers, whether
By pleasing or teasing, can easily take.

Watch, then, the band of rivals as they climb up and down
Their steep stone gennels in twos and threes, at times
Arm in arm, but never, thank God, in step; or engaged
On the shady side of a square at midday in
Voluble discourse, knowing each other too well to think
There are any important secrets, unable
To conceive a god whose temper-tantrums are moral
And not to be pacified by a clever line
Or a good lay: for accustomed to a stone that responds,
They have never had to veil their faces in awe
Of a crater whose blazing fury could not be fixed;
Adjusted to the local needs of valleys
Where everything can be touched or reached by walking,
Their eyes have never looked into infinite space
Through the lattice-work of a nomad's comb; born lucky,
Their legs have never encountered the fungi
And insects of the jungle, the monstrous forms and lives
With which we have nothing, we like to hope, in common.
So, when one of them goes to the bad, the way his mind works
Remains incomprehensible: to become a pimp
Or deal in fake jewellery or ruin a fine tenor voice

For effects that bring down the house, could happen to all
But the best and the worst of us...

That is why, I suppose,
The best and worst never stayed here long but sought
Immoderate soils where the beauty was not so external,
The light less public and the meaning of life
Something more than a mad camp. 'Come!' cried the granite wastes,
"How evasive is your humour, how accidental
Your kindest kiss, how permanent is death." (Saints-to-be
Slipped away sighing.) "Come!" purred the clays and gravels,
"On our plains there is room for armies to drill; rivers
Wait to be tamed and slaves to construct you a tomb
In the grand manner: soft as the earth is mankind and both
Need to be altered." (Intendant Caesars rose and
Left, slamming the door.) But the really reckless were fetched
By an older colder voice, the oceanic whisper:
"I am the solitude that asks and promises nothing;
That is how I shall set you free. There is no love;
There are only the various envies, all of them sad."

They were right, my dear, all those voices were right
And still are; this land is not the sweet home that it looks,
Nor its peace the historical calm of a site
Where something was settled once and for all: A back ward
And dilapidated province, connected
To the big busy world by a tunnel, with a certain
Seedy appeal, is that all it is now? Not quite:
It has a worldly duty which in spite of itself
It does not neglect, but calls into question
All the Great Powers assume; it disturbs our rights. The poet,
Admired for his earnest habit of calling
The sun the sun, his mind Puzzle, is made uneasy
By these marble statues which so obviously doubt
His antimythological myth; and these gamins,
Pursuing the scientist down the tiled colonnade
With such lively offers, rebuke his concern for Nature's
Remotest aspects: I, too, am reproached, for what
And how much you know. Not to lose time, not to get caught,
Not to be left behind, not, please! to resemble
The beasts who repeat themselves, or a thing like water
Or stone whose conduct can be predicted, these
Are our common prayer, whose greatest comfort is music
Which can be made anywhere, is invisible,
And does not smell. In so far as we have to look forward
To death as a fact, no doubt we are right: But if
Sins can be forgiven, if bodies rise from the dead,

These modifications of matter into
Innocent athletes and gesticulating fountains,
Made solely for pleasure, make a further point:
The blessed will not care what angle they are regarded from,
Having nothing to hide. Dear, I know nothing of
Either, but when I try to imagine a faultless love
Or the life to come, what I hear is the murmur
Of underground streams, what I see is a limestone landscape.
~ May 1948

I like the way Auden describes different personality types he has observed in human society. These types resonate throughout history, most recently Auden's immediate experience observing the Second World War. We see those personalities given to militarism (clay and gravel), to austere seriousness (the granite wastes), and to an existential cynicism (the oceanic whisper). I love how he identifies and describes the "limestone" type who can't "conceive a god whose temper-tantrums are moral and not to be pacified by a clever line." The beauty of this poem lies in the idea of traversing mental landscapes through a tour of physical ones.

Jabberwocky

By Lewis Carroll

Submitted by Dan Brownstein, Science Teacher and Chair, HHS

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.
'Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!'
He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought--
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.
And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!
One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.
'And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!'
He chortled in his joy.
'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Believe it or not, I have a favorite poem..... "jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll. When I was a child, my grandmother (who was quite a bohemian in her days and far better versed in literature and the arts than I could ever hope to be), gave me a book of great poems with fantastic animation. I used be obsessed with this particular one.

Salt Of The Earth

By Mick Jagger and Keith Richards
Submitted by Mike Mahony, English Department Chair, HHS

Let's drink to the hard working people
Let's drink to the lowly of birth
Raise your glass to the good and the evil
Let's drink to the salt of the earth
Say a prayer for the common foot soldier
Spare a thought for his back breaking work
Say a prayer for his wife and his children
Who burn the fires and who still till the earth

And when I search a faceless crowd
A swirling mass of gray and
Black and white
They don't look real to me
In fact, they look so strange

Raise your glass to the hard working people
Let's drink to the uncounted heads
Let's think of the wavering millions
Who need leaders but get gamblers instead
Spare a thought for the stay-at-home voter
His empty eyes gaze at strange beauty shows
And a parade of the gray suited grafters
A choice of cancer or polio

And when I look in the faceless crowd
A swirling mass of grays and
Black and white
They don't look real to me
Or don't they look so strange

Let's drink to the hard working people
Let's think of the lowly of birth
Spare a thought for the rag taggy people
Let's drink to the salt of the earth
Let's drink to the hard working people
Let's drink to the salt of the earth
Let's drink to the two thousand million
Let's think of the humble of birth

One of my favorite poems is by Ben Jonson on the death of his first son. I revel in its carefully structured heroic couplets that seem to contain the uncontainable grief of such a tragedy--the boy died on his seventh birthday. But for this collection, I want to offer something more timely but just as heart wrenching. The Rolling Stones performed "The Salt of the Earth" at the concert following the horror of 9/11. I was listening to the CD this week and realized how dull our memory quickly becomes. It takes the power of poetry, and maybe the verse sung with music, to bring out its symphony and song. Listening to the concert CD, and this song in particular, I remembered how tenuous life actually is and how we too easily forget. Poetry, if it works, keeps the essential in mind.

“The Prophet” On Children

By Kahlil Gibran

Submitted by Tessa Carlson, Secretary, HHS

And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, Speak to us of Children.
And he said:

Your children are not your children.
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And thought they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your
dreams.
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.
The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might
that His arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;
For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

The reason I like "The Prophet" is that it has been a good friend to me through good and bad times in my life. It is always within reach and always gives me comfort. This is just one small section of the book that is part of me.

To his Coy Mistress

By Andrew Marvell

Submitted by Martin Merchant, Art Teacher, HHS

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day;
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood;
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long preserv'd virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust.
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none I think do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may;
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapp'd power.

Let us roll all our strength, and all
Our sweetness, up into one ball;
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough the iron gates of life.
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

I have always been delighted by Andrew Marvell's poem to his reluctant girlfriend... to me it's a wonderful mix of imagery memorably crafted by a dude on his game 350 years ago, trying to sweet talk his lady into lowering her defenses. To me there is a masterful marriage of low purpose and profundity. This combination transforms this artful piece of seduction into a moving reflection on the human condition.

I love the slow rhythm of the first section, a languid embroidery of phrases in a stately, worshipful tribute to her beauty.

Then he brings her up short in the middle section, with vividly gruesome images of the grave, warning her of the terrible waste her virtue dooms her to. I am embarrassed by his ulterior motive and proud of his bold strategy.

Then I can see him whispering in her ear... let's get it on! Like a hip-hop lyric, this self-centered male player on the make, this honey-tongued seducer, comes on strong in his attempt to sweet-talk a reluctant female into intimacy. What language and rhythms! I'm loving the build-up to the explosive "tear our pleasures with rough strife through the iron gates of life"... whatta line! Hats off, Andy, you dog. A great poem and a nice try, but she's probably too smart to fall for this kind of patter. But man, what patter.

URBAN HAIKU

Written and Submitted by Marc Rosner, Chemistry Teacher, HHS

Asphalt underfoot,
soft gum in the melting pot.
Tongues I can't follow.

Rocking Number One
snaking forgotten tunnels
subterranean.

Small choppy whitecaps
fish and mud odors mingled
reservoir alive.

Two old shopping carts
a hundred bottles and cans
a warm, safe foyer.

No sweaty joggers,
just a thick billowy fog
hugging Central Park.

Beveled glass windows
gargoyles and brownstone steps
ivy climbing wild.

Glass and steel towers
soaring loftily upward
I tremble and spin.

She wants the Plaza,
The kids, the country estate,
And Fifty Million.

My ancestry traced
up musty tenement stairs:
a vein of precious ore.

Keeping Things Whole

By Mark Strand

Submitted by Ross Abrams, English Teacher, HHS

In a field
I am the absence
of field.
This is
always the case.
Wherever I am
I am what is missing.

When I walk
I part the air
and always
the air moves in
to fill the spaces
where my body's been.

We all have reasons
for moving.
I move
to keep things whole.

I first heard this poem on a CD collection called "In Their Own Voices: A Century or Recorded Poetry," which included readings by everyone from Robert Frost to Dylan Thomas. In so many cases, I found myself disappointed with the readings. Langston Hughes sounded so much more delicate reading his poem "Mulatto" than the syncopated rage I imagined when I first read the poem on the page. The CD collection did have some standouts, though, and Mark Strand's sonorous reading of "Keeping Things Whole" has stuck with me every since I first heard it. No matter how many times I read the printed words I cannot get Strand's voice out of my head – one part Bob Dylan, one part Philip Roth, both haunting and hopeful. The poem lends itself to all sorts of post-modern readings about the self as a construct only recognizable through the opposition (what it is not). You cannot help but hear a certain despair in the first stanza with all its discussion of absence and things that have gone missing; however, the poem recovers itself from the brink of nihilism with its final stanza and indeed its final word. Somehow, in a world where each thing represents a lack, an absence, by keeping ourselves in motion, we can still achieve some semblance of wholeness.

The Second Coming

By William Butler Yeats Submitted by Art Ralston, Social Studies Teacher, HHS

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of Spritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

I am haunted by the imagery of this poem. The sense of the world on the verge of chaos seems both ominous and dangerous. The idea that, 'Things fall apart' (reference in the title of Achebe's novel by the same name) and that the 'center can not hold' captures, for me, the impending disaster that comes in those dark days before WWII. The 'best' - the world's democracy's - are without conviction, while the 'worst' - Fascists - are intensely passionate. That might be the best description of the politic environment between the wars that I have yet come across. Also, the recurring imagery of birds circling (circling what??? Death?) seems particularly frightening. My nightmares usually involve circling birds and this poem represents the worst type of nightmare, one that you wake up from and find to be true.

The Unicorn

By Shel Silverstein

Submitted by Greg Stephens, Math Teacher and Chair, HHS

A long time ago when the earth was green
And there was more kinds of animals than you've ever seen,
And they run around free while the earth was bein' born
And the loveliest of all was the Unicorn.

There was green alligators and long-necked geese.
There was humpy bumpy camels and chimpanzees.
There was catsandratsandelephants, but sure as you're born
The loveliest of all was the Unicorn.

But the Lord seen some sinnin', and it caused him pain.
He says, "Stand back, I'm gonna make it rain."
He says, "Hey brother Noah, I'll tell you watcha do
Go and build me a floatin' zoo.

And you take two alligators, and a couple of geese,
Two humpy bumpy camels and two chimpanzees.
Take twocatsandratsandelephants, but sure as you're born,
Noah, don't you forget my Unicorn."

Now Noah was there and he answered the callin',
And he finished up the ark just as the rain started fallin'.
He marched in the animals two by two,
And he called out as they went through,

"Hey Lord, I got your two alligators and your couple of geese,
Your humpy bumpy camels and your two chimpanzees.
Got your catsandratsandelephants, but Lord I'm so forlorn
Cause I just don't see no Unicorn."

Oh! Noah looked out through the drivin' rain,
But the Unicorns were hidin' playin' silly games.
They were kickin' and splashin' in the misty morn,
Oh them silly Unicorn.

Then the goat started goatin' and the snake started snakin',
The elephant started elephantin' and the boat started shakin'
The mouse started squeekin' and the lion started roarin",
And everyone's aboard but the Unicorn.
I mean the green alligators and the long-neck geese,
The humpy bumpy camels and the chimpanzees.
Noah cried, "Close the door, 'cause the rain is pourin' -
And we just can't wait for them Unicorn."

Then the Ark started movin', and it drifted with the tide,
And the Unicorns looked up from the rock and cried.
And the water came up and sort of floated them away -
That's why you've never seen a Unicorn to this day.

You'll see a lot of alligators and a whole mess of geese.
You'll see humpy bumpy camels and lots of chimpanzees.
You'll see catsandratsandelephants, but sure as you're born
You're never gonna see no Unicorn.

I remember Shel Silverstein sitting on the rug in my grandfather's house, the two of them playing the guitar, laughing, and telling stories. As a kid, I loved the poems for their silliness and satire. Now my own kids are enjoying them. It's ok that some of the poems are sad. 'The Unicorn' is especially sad and my younger daughter wept the first time I read it aloud. Even now -- she's ten -- we often decide that the Unicorn poem should stay in the book and read Sarah Sylvia Cynthia Stout instead (or any number of others). I like the rhythm of the poem and the stark contrast between the informality of the verse and the building realization that the story is a tragedy. Life is full of melancholy and joy. I like the poem because it has bits of both.

The Lay of the Last Minstrel

By Sir Walter Scott

Submitted by Thomas Fazio, Principal, HHS

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go mark him well;
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

The above is only a part of the whole poem. It appears in a short story by Edward Everett Hale, 'The Man Without a Country.' I read the short story in 8th grade and memorized the poem. I can still recite it to this day. I remember it was a part of a team project with my English teacher, Miss Coyle, and my history teacher, Mr. O'Brien. Miss Coyle was quite elderly having taught my father in addition to me. Mr. O'Brien went on to become a principal.