

### **1. VERNAL SENTIMENT**

Theodore Roethke from *Open House* (1941)

Though the crocuses poke up their heads in the usual places,  
The frog scum appear on the pond with the same froth of green,  
And boys moon at girls with last year's fatuous faces,  
I never am bored, however familiar the scene.

When from under the barn the cat brings a similar litter,  
Two yellow and black, and one that looks in between,  
Though it all happened before, I cannot grow bitter:  
I rejoice in the spring, as though no spring ever had been.

### **2. THE PREMONITION**

Theodore Roethke from *Open House* (1941)

Walking this field I remember  
Days of another summer.  
Oh that was long ago! I kept  
Close to the heels of my father,  
Matching his stride with half-steps  
Until we came to a river.  
He dipped his hand in the shallow;  
Water ran over and under  
Hair on a narrow wrist bone;  
His image kept following after, -  
Flashed with the sun in the ripple.  
But when he stood up, that face  
Was lost in a maze of water.

### **3. ELEGY FOR THE SWANS AT GRACE POND**

Bruce Weigl from *What Saves Us* (1992)

Bored with bread the children throw to her,  
the swan who lost her one great love  
when he washed up, tangled in the cold dawn,  
drowned in the roots of the willow,  
clings to the blue pond and its amnesia.  
Grief makes her circle the willow's shadow  
where she waits for him to reappear  
evenings when the light disappears  
and each lap of waves grows greener.  
Before a hole opened up in the life  
they'd invented in the clouds,  
we watched them tangle their necks  
around each other, sailing side by side  
as to save themselves from our world.

### **4. THE APPLES**

Dorothy Roberts from *Self of Loss* (1965)

The apples were larger than the hand  
Yet crisp to the heart and golden or red,  
And biting into something so round  
Gave as strong a sense as could be of the good world  
Of that far countryside where the hills rolled  
On and on under orchards and the wandering road.

We would go on an autumn day and walk as far  
As the spread wing of the countryside could take us away,  
Being still in our own land yet far away  
Amid autumn furrows and the goldenrod.

And at the far end of the walk we would find these apples  
On trees strayed almost to the edge of the forest,  
Reaching through the far away of that land  
For autumn epitomized in a single globe.

## 5. INDIAN SUMMER

Robert Lima

The season seems defiant of its normal role.  
It fails to function with the usual stomp and clout  
of snow and sleet, of ice beneath the feet,  
of threat to life and limb if one goes out.

Instead, it gives the grey of winter a new dress  
with larks in leafless trees, returning fowl  
that bask in median temperatures of days in spring,  
and turns its back upon the expectations of the owl.

There's no assurance it'll stay as such a while,  
or even, for a happy time, con nature into thinking big.  
But it provides a meantime respite in the scheme of things  
from all-hail breaking loose and forcing winter's dig.

## 6. "HAIKU" TRIO

Bill Hanson January 1988

Sound of walking in snow  
Tangled web of sky  
One feather  
Bone breaks walk in

Trees float in white  
Eyes close  
Iced river talks  
Bird melts

Bare trees stand against white  
One voice speaks  
Heron flies  
Remembered rose

## 7. DISTINCT

Dorothy Roberts from *Extended* (1967)

Over the pale fields  
And the woods' dim grey  
The night begins to fall,  
I walk this way.

The stars begin to shine,  
The woods grow black,  
Across the crusted fields  
I break a track.

Sparkle of many stars  
The snow lying mute  
Distinguish all I need  
To take this route.