**Chapter Ten**

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**For a Lamb  
Richard Eberhart  
b. 1904**

I saw on the slant hill a putrid lamb,

Propped with daisies. The sleep looked deep

The face nudged in the green pillow

But the guts were out for crows to eat.

Where’s the lamb? whose tender plaint

Said all for the mute breezes.

Say he’s in the wind somewhere,

Say, there’s a lamb in the daisies.

**Apparently with no surprise   
Emily Dickinson  
1830-1886**

Apparently with no surprise,

To any happy flower,

The frost beheads it at its play,

In accidental power.

The blond assassin passes on.

The sun proceeds unmoved,

To measure off another day,

For an approving God.

**Since there’s no help   
Michael Drayton  
1563-1631**

Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part,

Nay, I have done, you get no more of me,

And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,

That thus so cleanly I myself can free.

Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,

And when we meet at any time again

Be it not seen in either of our brows

That we one jot of former love retain.

Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,

When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,

When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,

And Innocence is closing up his eyes,

Now, if thou wouldst, when all have giv'n him over,

From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

**My mistress’ eyes  
William Shakespeare  
1564-1616**

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;

Coral is far more red than her lips' red;

If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;

If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.

I have seen roses damasked, red and white,

But no such roses see I in her cheeks;

And in some perfumes is there more delight

Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.

I love to hear her speak, yet well I know

That music hath a far more pleasing sound;

I grant I never saw a goddess go;

My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.

And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare

As any she belied with false compare.

**Crossing the Bar   
Alfred, Lord Tennyson   
1809--1892**

Sunset and evening star,

And one clear call for me!

And may there be no moaning of the bar,

When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,

Too full for sound and foam,

When that which drew from out the boundless deep

Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,

And after that the dark!

And may there be no sadness of farewell,

When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place

The flood may bear me far,

I hope to see my Pilot face to face

When I have crost the bar.

**The Oxen   
Thomas Hardy  
1840-1928**

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.

"Now they are all on their knees,"

An elder said as we sat in a flock

By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where

They dwelt in their strawy pen,

Nor did it occur to one of us there

To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave

In these years! Yet, I feel,

If someone said on Christmas Eve,

"Come; see the oxen kneel

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb

Our childhood used to know,"

I should go with him in the gloom,

Hoping it might be so.

**One dignity delays for all**

**Emily Dickinson  
1830-1886**

One dignity delays for all—

One mitred Afternoon—

None can avoid this purple—

None evade this Crown!

Coach, it insures, and footmen—

Chamber, and state, and throng—

Bells, also, in the village

As we ride grand along!

What dignified Attendants!

What service when we pause!

How loyally at parting

Their hundred hats they raise!

Her pomp surpassing ermine

When simple You, and I,

Present our meek escutheon

And claim the rank to die!

**‘Twas warm—at first—like Us  
Emily Dickinson  
1830-1886**

'Twas warm—at first—like Us—

Until there crept upon

A Chill—like frost upon a Glass—

Till all the scene—be gone.

The Forehead copied Stone—

The Fingers grew too cold

To ache—and like a Skater's Brook—

The busy eyes—congealed—

It straightened—that was all—

It crowded Cold to Cold—

It multiplied indifference—

As Pride were all it could—

And even when with Cords—

'Twas lowered, like a Weight—

It made no Signal, nor demurred,

But dropped like Adamant.

**The Apparition  
John Donne  
1572-1631**

When by thy scorn, O murd'ress, I am dead

And that thou think'st thee free

From all solicitation from me,

Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,

And thee, feign'd vestal, in worse arms shall see;

Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,

And he, whose thou art then, being tir'd before,

Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think

Thou call'st for more,

And in false sleep will from thee shrink;

And then, poor aspen wretch, neglected thou

Bath'd in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lie

A verier ghost than I.

What I will say, I will not tell thee now,

Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,

I'had rather thou shouldst painfully repent,

Than by my threat'nings rest still innocent.

**The Flea   
John Donne  
1572-1631**

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,

How little that which thou deny'st me is;

It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,

And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;

Thou know'st that this cannot be said

A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead;

Yet this enjoys before it woo,

And pampered swells with one blood made of two,

And this, alas, is more than we would do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,

Where we almost, yea, more than married are.

This flea is you and I, and this

Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;

Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,

And cloistered in these living walls of jet.

Though use make you apt to kill me,

Let not to that, self-murder added be,

And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since

Purpled thy nail in blood of innocence?

Wherein could this flea guilty be,

Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?

Yet thou triumph'st and say'st that thou

Find'st not thyself, nor me the weaker now;

'Tis true, then learn how false fears be:

Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,

Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee

**Dover Beach  
Matthew Arnold  
1822-1888**

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 {AE}gean, 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.

**Church Going   
Philip Larkin  
1922-1985**

Once I am sure there's nothing going on

I step inside, letting the door thud shut.

Another church: matting, seats, and stone,

And little books; sprawlings of flowers, cut

For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff

Up at the holy end; the small neat organ;

And a tense, musty, unignorable silence,

Brewed God knows how long. Hatless, I take off

My cycle-clips in awkward reverence,

Move forward, run my hand around the font.

From where I stand, the roof looks almost new-

Cleaned or restored? Someone would know: I don't.

Mounting the lectern, I peruse a few

Hectoring large-scale verses, and pronounce

"Here endeth" much more loudly than I'd meant.

The echoes snigger briefly. Back at the door

I sign the book, donate an Irish sixpence,

Reflect the place was not worth stopping for.

Yet stop I did: in fact I often do,

And always end much at a loss like this,

Wondering what to look for; wondering, too,

When churches fall completely out of use

What we shall turn them into, if we shall keep

A few cathedrals chronically on show,

Their parchment, plate, and pyx in locked cases,

And let the rest rent-free to rain and sheep.

Shall we avoid them as unlucky places?

Or, after dark, will dubious women come

To make their children touch a particular stone;

Pick simples for a cancer; or on some

Advised night see walking a dead one?

Power of some sort or other will go on

In games, in riddles, seemingly at random;

But superstition, like belief, must die,

And what remains when disbelief has gone?

Grass, weedy pavement, brambles, buttress, sky,

A shape less recognizable each week,

A purpose more obscure. I wonder who

Will be the last, the very last, to seek

This place for what it was; one of the crew

That tap and jot and know what rood-lofts were?

Some ruin-bibber, randy for antique,

Or Christmas-addict, counting on a whiff

Of gown-and-bands and organ-pipes and myrrh?

Or will he be my representative,

Bored, uninformed, knowing the ghostly silt

Dispersed, yet tending to this cross of ground

Through suburb scrub because it held unspilt

So long and equably what since is found

Only in separation -- marriage, and birth,

And death, and thoughts of these -- for whom was built

This special shell? For, though I've no idea

What this accoutred frowsty barn is worth,

It pleases me to stand in silence here;

A serious house on serious earth it is,

In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,

Are recognised, and robed as destinies.

And that much never can be obsolete,

Since someone will forever be surprising

A hunger in himself to be more serious,

And gravitating with it to this ground,

Which, he once heard, was proper to grow wise in,

If only that so many dead lie round.

**Getting Out   
Cleopatra Mathis  
b. 1947**

That year we hardly slept, walking like inmates

who beat the walls. Every night

another refusal, the silent work

of tightening the heart.

Exhausted, we gave up; escaped

to the apartment pool, swimming those laps

until the first light relieved us.

Days were different: FM and full-blast

blues, hours of guitar “you gonna miss me

when I’m gone.” Think how you tried

to pack up and go, for weeks stumbling

over piles of clothing, the unstrung tennis rackets.

Finally locked into blame, we paced

that short hall, heaving words like furniture.

I have the last unshredded pictures

of our matching eyes and hair. We’ve kept

to separate sides of the map,

still I’m startled by men who look like you.

And in the yearly letter, you’re sure to say

you’re happy now. Yet I think of the lawyer’s bewilderment

when we cried, the last day. Taking hands

we walked apart, until our arms stretched

between us. We held on tight, and let go.

**Love   
Anonymous**

There’s the wonderful love of a beautiful maid,  
And the love of a staunch true man,  
And the love of a baby that’s unafraid—  
All have existed since time began.  
But the most wonderful love, the Love of all loves,  
Even greater than the love for Mother,   
Is the infinite, tenderest, passionate love  
Of one dead drunk for another.