Perrine’s *Sound and Sense*

**Chapter 4**

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Meeting at Night

By Robert Browning (1812-1889)

The grey sea and the long black land;

And the yellow half-moon large and low;

And the startled little waves that leap

In fiery ringlets from their sleep,

As I gain the cove with pushing prow,

And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;

Three fields to cross till a farm appears;

A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch

And blue spurt of a lighted match,

And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears,

Than the two hearts beating each to each!

The grey sea and the long black land;

And the yellow half-moon large and low;

And the startled little waves that leap

In fiery ringlets from their sleep,

As I gain the cove with pushing prow,

And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

**II**

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;

Three fields to cross till a farm appears;

A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch

And blue spurt of a lighted match,

And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears,

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Parting at Morning

By Robert Browning (1812-1889)

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,

And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:

And straight was a path of gold for him,

And the need of a world of men for me.

Spring

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

Nothing is so beautiful as Spring –

 When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;

 Thrush’s eggs look little low heavens, and thrush

Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring

The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;

 The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush

 The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush

With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?

 A strain of the earth’s sweet being in the beginning

In Eden garden. – Have, get, before it cloy,

 Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,

Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,

 Most, O maid’s child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

The Widow’s Lament in Springtime

By William Carlos Williams (1883-1963)

Sorrow is my own yard

where the new grass

flames as it has flamed

often before, but not

with the cold fire

that closes round me this year.

Thirty-five years

I lived with my husband.

The plum tree is white today

with masses of flowers.

Masses of flowers

load the cherry branches

and color some bushes

yellow and some red,

but the grief in my heart

is stronger than they,

for though they were my joy

formerly, today I notice them

and turn away forgetting.

Today my son told me

that in the meadows,

at the edge of the heavy woods

in the distance, he saw

trees of white flowers.

I feel that I would like

to go there

and fall into those flowers

and sink into the marsh near them.

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain

By Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,

And Mourners to and fro

 Kept treading - treading - till it seemed

That Sense was breaking through -

And when they all were seated,

A Service, like a Drum -

 Kept beating - beating - till I thought

My mind was going numb -

And then I heard them lift a Box

 And creak across my Soul

With those same Boots of Lead, again,

 Then Space - began to toll,

As all the Heavens were a Bell,

And Being, but an Ear,

And I, and Silence, some strange Race,

Wrecked, solitary, here -

And then a Plank in Reason, broke,

And I dropped down, and down –

And hit a World, at every plunge,

And Finished knowing - then –

The Forge

By Seamus Heaney (b. 1939)

All I know is a door into the dark,

Outside, old axles and iron hoops rusting;

Inside, the hammered anvil's short-pitched ring,

The unpredictable fantail of sparks

Or hiss when a new shoe toughens in water.

The anvil must be somewhere in the centre,

Horned as a unicorn, at one end square,

Set there immoveable: an altar

Where he expends himself in shape and music.

Sometimes, leather aproned, hairs in his nose,

He leans out on the jamb, recalls a clatter

Of hoofs where traffic is flashing in rows;

Then grunts and goes in, with a slam and a flick

To beat real iron out, to work the bellows

The Convergence of the Twain

By Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)

(Lines on the loss of the "Titanic")

I

 In a solitude of the sea

 Deep from human vanity,

And the Pride of Life that planned her, stilly couches she.

II

 Steel chambers, late the pyres

 Of her salamandrine fires,

Cold currents thrid, and turn to rhythmic tidal lyres.

III

 Over the mirrors meant

 To glass the opulent

The sea-worm crawls — grotesque, slimed, dumb, indifferent.

IV

 Jewels in joy designed

 To ravish the sensuous mind

Lie lightless, all their sparkles bleared and black and blind.

V

 Dim moon-eyed fishes near

 Gaze at the gilded gear

And query: "What does this vaingloriousness down here?" ...

VI

 Well: while was fashioning

 This creature of cleaving wing,

The Immanent Will that stirs and urges everything

VII

 Prepared a sinister mate

 For her — so gaily great —

A Shape of Ice, for the time far and dissociate.

VIII

 And as the smart ship grew

 In stature, grace, and hue,

In shadowy silent distance grew the Iceberg too.

IX

 Alien they seemed to be;

 No mortal eye could see

The intimate welding of their later history,

X

 Or sign that they were bent

 By paths coincident

On being anon twin halves of one august event,

XI

 Till the Spinner of the Years

 Said "Now!" And each one hears,

And consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres. *(Lines on the loss of the "Titanic")*

I

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Deep from human vanity,

And the Pride of Life that planned her, stilly couches she.

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XI

Till the Spinner of the Years

Said "Now!" And each one hears,

And consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres.

After Apple-Picking

Robert Frost (1874-1963)

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree

Toward heaven still,

And there's a barrel that I didn't fill

Beside it, and there may be two or three

Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.

But I am done with apple-picking now.

Essence of winter sleep is on the night,

The scent of apples: I am drowsing off.

I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight

I got from looking through a pane of glass

I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough

And held against the world of hoary grass.

It melted, and I let it fall and break.

But I was well

Upon my way to sleep before it fell,

And I could tell

What form my dreaming was about to take.

Magnified apples appear and disappear,

Stem end and blossom end,

And every fleck of russet showing clear.

My instep arch not only keeps the ache,

It keeps the pressure of a ladder-round.

I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend.

And I keep hearing from the cellar bin

The rumbling sound

Of load on load of apples coming in.

For I have had too much

Of apple-picking: I am overtired

Of the great harvest I myself desired.

There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,

Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.

For all

That struck the earth,

No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,

Went surely to the cider-apple heap

As of no worth.

One can see what will trouble

This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.

Were he not gone,

The woodchuck could say whether it's like his

Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,

Or just some human sleep.

Those Winter Sundays

By Robert Hayden (1913-1980)

Sundays too my father got up early

and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,

then with cracked hands that ached

from labor in the weekday weather made

banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I’d wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.

When the rooms were warm, he’d call,

and slowly I would rise and dress,

fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,

who had driven out the cold

and polished my good shoes as well.

What did I know, what did I know

of love’s austere and lonely offices?

Reapers

By Jean Toomer (1894-1967)

Black reapers with the sound of steel on stones

Are sharpening scythes. I see them place the hones

In their hip-pockets as a thing that’s done,

And start their silent swinging, one by one.

Black horses drive a mower through the weeds,

And there, a field rat, startled, squealing bleeds.

His belly close to ground. I see the blade,

Blood-stained, continue cutting weeds and shade.

To Autumn

By John Keats (1795-1821)

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,

 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;

Conspiring with him how to load and bless

 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;

To bend with apples the moss’d cottage-trees,

 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;

 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells

 With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,

And still more, later flowers for the bees,

Until they think warm days will never cease,

 For summer has o’er-brimm’d their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?

 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find

Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,

 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;

Or on a half-reap’d furrow sound asleep,

 Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook

 Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:

And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep

 Steady thy laden head across a brook;

 Or by a cider-press, with patient look,

 Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?

 Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,--

While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,

 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn

 Among the river sallows, borne aloft

 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;

 Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft

 The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,

 And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree

Toward heaven still,

And there's a barrel that I didn't fill

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