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|  **Algernon Charles** **Swinburne 1837-1909*****Chorus* from “*Atalanta in Calydon*”**Before the beginning of years There came to the making of man Time, with a gift of tears; Grief, with a glass that ran; Pleasure, with pain for leaven; Summer, with flowers that fell; Remembrance fallen from heaven, And madness risen from hell; Strength without hands to smite; Love that endures for a breath; Night, the shadow of light; And life, the shadow of death. And the high gods took in hand Fire and the falling of tears; And a measure of sliding sand From under the feet of the years; And froth and drift of the sea; And dust of the labouring earth; And bodies of things to be In the houses of death and of birth; And wrought with weeping and laughter, And fashioned with loathing and love, With life before and after, And death beneath and above, For a day, and a night, and a morrow, That his strength might endure for a span With travail and heavy sorrow, The holy spirit of man.From the winds of the north and the south They gathered as unto strife;They breathed upon his mouth, They filled his body with life; Eye-sight and speech they wrought For the veils of the soul therein, A time for labour and thought, A time to serve and to sin; They gave him light in his ways, And love, and a space for delight, And beauty, and length of days, And night, and sleep in the night. His speech is a burning fire; With his lips he travaileth; In his heart is a blind desire; And his eyes foreknowledge of death; He weaves, and is clothed with derision; Sows, and he shall not reap; His life is a watch or a vision Between a sleep and a sleep.Walt Whitman 1819-1892 from *Song Of The Open Road* (from *Leaves of Grass*)AFOOT and light-hearted, I take to the open road,Healthy, free, the world before me,The long brown path before me, leading wherever I choose.Henceforth I ask not good-fortune--I myself am good fortune;Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing,Strong and content, I travel the open road.The earth--that is sufficient;I do not want the constellations any nearer;I know they are very well where they are;I know they suffice for those who belong to them. (Still here I carry my old delicious burdens;I carry them,men and women-I carry them with me wherever I go;I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them;I am fill'd with them, and I will fill them in return.) |  **Christina Rossetti**  **1830-1894** ***A BIRTHDAY***My heart is like a singing bird Whose nest is in a water'd shoot; My heart is like an apple-tree Whose boughs are bent with thick-set fruit; My heart is like a rainbow shell That paddles in a halcyon sea; My heart is gladder than all these, Because my love is come to me. Raise me a daïs of silk and down; Hang it with vair and purple dyes; Carve it in doves and pomegranates, And peacocks with a hundred eyes; Work it in gold and silver grapes, In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys; Because the birthday of my life Is come, my love is come to me. **Oscar Wilde 1854-1900** **Endymion** (For Music)The apple trees are hung with gold,And birds are loud in Arcady,The sheep lie bleating in the fold,The wild goat runs across the wold,But yesterday his love he told,I know he will come back to me.O rising moon! O Lady moon!Be you my lover's sentinel,You cannot choose but know him well,For he is shod with purple shoon,You cannot choose but know my love,For he a shepherd's crook doth bear,And he is soft as any dove,And brown and curly is his hair.The turtle now has ceased to callUpon her crimson-footed groom,The grey wolf prowls about the stall,The lily's singing seneschalSleeps in the lily-bell, and allThe violet hills are lost in gloom.O risen moon! O holy moon!Stand on the top of Helice,And if my own true love you see,Ah! if you see the purple shoon,The hazel crook, the lad's brown hair,The goat-skin wrapped about his arm,Tell him that I am waiting whereThe rushlight glimmers in the Farm.The falling dew is cold and chill,And no bird sings in Arcady,The little fauns have left the hill,Even the tired daffodilHas closed its gilded doors, and stillMy lover comes not back to me.False moon! False moon! O waning moon!Where is my own true lover gone,Where are the lips vermilion,The shepherd's crook, the purple shoon?Why spread that silver pavilion,Why wear that veil of drifting mist?Ah! thou hast young Endymion,Thou hast the lips that should be kissed! |  **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 1809-1882**  **A PSALM OF LIFE**Tell me not, in mournful numbers, “Life is but an empty dream!”For the soul is dead that slumbers, And things are not what they seem.Life is real! Life is earnest! And the grave is not its goal;“Dust thou art, to dust returnest,” Was not spoken of the soul.Not enjoyment, and not sorrow, Is our destined end or way;But to act, that each tomorrow Find us farther than today.Art is long, and Time is fleeting, And our hearts, though stout and brave,Still, like muffled drums, are beating Funeral marches to the grave.In the world’s broad field of battle, In the bivouac of Life,Be not like dumb driven cattle! Be a hero in the strife!Trust no Future, howe’er pleasant! Let the dead Past bury its dead!Act, - act in the living Present! Heart within, and God o’erhead.Lives of great men all remind us, We can make our lives sublime,And, departing, leave behind us Footprints on the sands of time;Footprints, that perhaps another, Sailing o’er life’s solemn main,A forlorn and shipwreck’d brother, Seeing, shall take heart again.Let us, then, be up and doing, With a heart for any fate;Still achieving, still pursuing, Learn to labour and to wait. **William Butler**  **Yeats 1865-1939*****An Irish Airman Foresees His Death***I KNOW that I shall meet my fateSomewhere among the clouds above;Those that I fight I do not hate,Those that I guard I do not love;My county is Kiltartan Cross,My countrymen Kiltartan's poor,No likely end could bring them lossOr leave them happier than before.Nor law, nor duty bade me fight,Nor public men, nor cheering crowds,A lonely impulse of delightDrove to this tumult in the clouds;I balanced all, brought all to mind,The years to come seemed waste of breath,A waste of breath the years behindIn balance with this life, this death.  |