**From *Beowulf***

Anon, trans. Seamus Heaney

Then a powerful demon, a prowler through the dark,

Nursed a hard grievance. It harrowed him  
To hear the din of the loud banquet  
Every day in the hall, the harp being struck

And the clear song of a skilled poet 90

Telling with mastery of man’s beginnings,  
How the Almighty had made the earth  
A gleaming plain girdled with waters;

In His splendour He set the sun and the moon

To be earth’s lamplight, lanterns for men,

And filled the broad lap of the world  
With branches and leaves; and quickened life

In every other thing that moved.

So times were pleasant for the people there  
Until finally one, a fiend out of hell, 100

Began to work his evil in the world.  
Grendel was the name of this grim demon  
Haunting the marches, marauding round the heath  
And the desolate fens; he had dwelt for a time  
In misery among the banished monsters,  
Cain’s clan, whom the Creator had outlawed  
And condemned as outcasts. For the killing of Abel  
The Eternal Lord had exacted a price:

Cain got no good from committing that murder  
Because the Almighty made him anathema 110

And out of the curse of this exile there sprang  
Ogres and elves and evil phantoms  
And the giants too who strove with God  
Time and again until He gave them their reward.

So, after nightfall, Grendel set out  
For the lofty house, to see how the Ring-Danes  
Were settling into it after their drink,  
And there he came upon them, a company of the best,  
Asleep from their feasting, insensible to pain  
And human sorrow. Suddenly then 120

The God-cursed brute was creating havoc:  
Greedy and grim, he grabbed thirty men  
From their resting places and rushed to his lair,  
Flushed up and inflamed from the raid,  
Blundering back with the butchered corpses.

Then as dawn brightened and the day broke  
Grendel’s powers of destruction were plain:  
Their wassail was over, they wept to heaven  
And mourned under morning. Their mighty prince,  
The storied leader, sat stricken and helpless, 130

Humiliated by the loss of his guard,

Bewildered and stunned, staring aghast  
At the demon’s trail, in deep distress.  
He was numb with grief, but got no respite

For one night later merciless Grendel

Struck again with more gruesome murders.

Malignant by nature, he never showed remorse.  
It was easy then to meet with a man  
Shifting himself to a safer distance  
To bed in the bothies\*, for who could be blind 140

To the evidence of his eyes, the obviousness

Of that hall-watcher’s hate? Whoever escaped

Kept a weather-eye open and moved away.

So Grendel ruled in defiance of right,  
One against all, until the greatest house  
In the world stood empty , a deserted wallstead.  
For twelve winters, seasons of woe,  
The lord of the Shildings suffered under  
His load of sorrow; and so, before long,  
The news was known over the whole world. 150

Sad lays\* were sung about the beset king,  
The vicious raids and ravages of Grendel,  
His long and unrelenting feud,  
Nothing but war; how he would never  
Parley or make peace with any Dane  
Nor stop his death-dealing nor pay the death-price.  
No counselor could ever expect  
Fair reparation from those rabid hands.  
All were endangered; young and old  
Were hunted down by that dark death-shadow 160

Who lurked and swooped in the long nights  
On the misty moors; nobody knows  
Where these reavers\* from hell roam on their errands.

So Grendel waged his lonely war,  
Inflicting constant cruelties on the people,  
Atrocious hurt. He took over Heorot,  
Haunted the glittering hall after dark,  
But the throne itself, the treasure-seat,  
He was kept from approaching; he was the Lord’s outcast.

\* bothies- small huts or cottages

\*lays- stories about how things are

\*reavers- raiders or pillagers

**from *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight***

Anon (translator unattributed)

Another noise full new quickly came nigh  
That the lord might have leave to lift up his food,  
For hardly was the noise not a while ceased,  
And the first course in the court courteously served,  
There hastens in at the hall door an awesome figure,  
One of the most on earth in measure of height,  
From the neck to the waist so square and well-set,  
And his loins and his limbs so long and so big  
Half a giant in earth I hold that he was;   
Yet man must I nonetheless admit him to be  
And that the merriest in his muchness that might ride,  
For though of back and of breast his body was stout,  
Both his belly and his waist were worthily slim,  
And all his features conforming, in form that he had,

Full clean.  
But great wonder of the hue men had  
Set in his complexion seen:  
He fared like a fighter to dread,  
And over all deep green.

And all garbed in green this gallant and his clothes:  
A straight coat full tight that stuck to his sides,  
A merry mantle above, embellished within  
With fur skillfully trimmed, a lining full bright   
Of bright white ermine and his hood as well,  
That was lifted from his locks and laid on his shoulders;  
Neat well-fitting hose of that same green  
That covered his calves, and shining spurs below  
Of bright gold, on silken borders embroidered full rich,  
And with rich shoes below the shanks the chevalier rides,  
And all his vesture verily was verdant green,  
Both the bars of his belt and other bright stones,  
That were richly arranged in his array completely  
About himself and his saddle, upon silk works  
That would be too toilsome to tell of trifles the half  
That were embroidered above, with insects,and birds  
With gay gems of green, the gold all intermingled,  
The pendants of his horse trappings, the proud crupper;  
His mount's bit and all the metal enamelled was then,  
The stirrups that he stood on colored the same,  
And his saddle-bow next and its elegant skirts  
That ever glimmered and glowed all of green stones.  
The foal he fares on fully of that same hue,  
 Certain:  
A green horse great and thick,  
A steed full stiff to restrain;  
In embroidered bridle quick,  
For the gallant who held the rein.  
  
Well gay was this gallant and his gear in green,  
And the hair of his head matching his horse.  
Fair fanning locks enfold his shoulders,  
A beard big as a bush over his breast hangs  
That with the noble hair that from his head reaches  
Was clipped all around above his elbows  
That half his arms thereunder were held in, in the manner  
Of a king's cape that encloses his neck;  
The mane of that mighty horse much to it like,  
Well curled and combed with knots full many,  
Tied in with gold thread about the fair green,  
Always one strand of hair, another of gold,  
His tail and his topknot twisted in braids,  
And both bound with a band of bright green,  
Adorned with full dear gems to the top of the tuft,  
Then bound tightly with a thong, trickily knotted above,  
Where many bells full bright of burnished gold rang.

Such a foal in the field nor fighter that rides him  
Was never seen in that hall with sight ere that time  
 With eye.  
He looked like lightning as light,  
Said all that saw him come nigh;   
It seemed that no man might  
Such blows as his defy.  
  
Yet he had no helmet nor hauberk neither,  
Nor no armor nor plate that pertained to arms,  
Nor no spear nor no shield to shove nor to smite,  
But in his one hand he had a holly branch,   
That is greatest in green   when groves are bare,   
And an axe in his other, a huge and monstrous,  
A spiteful axe to describe in speech, if anyone could.  
Near four feet in length the large head had,  
With a spike of green steel and of hammered gold.  
The bit burnished bright with a broad edge,  
As well shaped to shear as a sharp razor.  
By the hilt of the strong shaft that stern one it gripped  
That was wound with iron to the weapon's end,  
And all engraved with green in gracious works;  
By a lace sash, coiled about, that was tied at the head  
And so down the shaft looped full oft,  
With fine tassles thereto attached thereby,  
And buttons of bright green, embroidered full rich.

This horseman held his way in and the hall enters,  
Driving to the high dais -- no danger he feared;  
Hailed he never any one but high he looked over.  
The first word that he whipped out: "Where is," he said,  
"The governor of this gang? Gladly I would  
See that stalwart in sight and speak with himself   
 And reason."  
To knights he cast his eyes  
And rolled them up and down;  
He stopped and studied to surmise   
Who wields there most renown.

**From *The Tempest***

By William Shakespeare

PROSPERO

Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself

Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!

Enter CALIBAN

CALIBAN

As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd

With raven's feather from unwholesome fen

Drop on you both! a south-west blow on ye

And blister you all o'er!

PROSPERO

For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps,

Side-stitches that shall pen thy breath up; urchins

Shall, for that vast of night that they may work,

All exercise on thee; thou shalt be pinch'd

As thick as honeycomb, each pinch more stinging

Than bees that made 'em.

CALIBAN

I must eat my dinner.

This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,

Which thou takest from me. When thou camest first,

Thou strokedst me and madest much of me, wouldst give me

Water with berries in't, and teach me how

To name the bigger light, and how the less,

That burn by day and night: and then I loved thee

And show'd thee all the qualities o' the isle,

The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:

Cursed be I that did so! All the charms

Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!

For I am all the subjects that you have,

Which first was mine own king: and here you sty me

In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me

The rest o' the island.

PROSPERO

Thou most lying slave,

Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have used thee,

Filth as thou art, with human care, and lodged thee

In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate

The honour of my child.

CALIBAN

O ho, O ho! would't had been done!

Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else

This isle with Calibans.

PROSPERO

Abhorred slave,

Which any print of goodness wilt not take,

Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,

Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour

One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,

Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like

A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes

With words that made them known. But thy vile race,

Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures

Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou

Deservedly confined into this rock,

Who hadst deserved more than a prison.

CALIBAN

You taught me language; and my profit on't

Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you

For learning me your language!

From **Paradise Lost Book X**

By John Milton

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers,

For in possession such, not onely of right,

I call ye and declare ye now, returnd

Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth

Triumphant out of this infernal Pit

Abominable, accurst, the house of woe, [ 465 ]

And Dungeon of our Tyrant: Now possess,

As Lords, a spacious World, to our native Heaven

Little inferiour, by my adventure hard

With peril great atchiev'd. Long were to tell

What I have don, what sufferd, with what paine [ 470 ]

Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep

Of horrible confusion, over which

By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd

To expedite your glorious march; but I

Toild out my uncouth passage, forc't to ride [ 475 ]

Th' untractable Abysse, plung'd in the womb

Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wilde,

That jealous of thir secrets fiercely oppos'd

My journey strange, with clamorous uproare

Protesting Fate supreame; thence how I found [ 480 ]

The new created World, which fame in Heav'n

Long had foretold, a Fabrick wonderful

Of absolute perfection, therein Man

Plac't in a Paradise, by our exile

Made happie: Him by fraud I have seduc'd [ 485 ]

From his Creator, and the more to increase

Your wonder, with an Apple; he thereat

Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up

Both his beloved Man and all his World,

To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, [ 490 ]

Without our hazard, labour, or allarme,

To range in, and to dwell, and over Man

To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.

True is, mee also he hath judg'd, or rather

Mee not, but the brute Serpent in whose shape [ 495 ]

Man I deceav'd: that which to mee belongs,

Is enmity, which he will put between

Mee and Mankinde; I am to bruise his heel;

His Seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:

A World who would not purchase with a bruise, [ 500 ]

Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account

Of my performance: What remains, ye Gods,

But up and enter now into full bliss.

So having said, a while he stood, expecting

Thir universal shout and high applause [ 505 ]

To fill his eare, when contrary he hears

On all sides, from innumerable tongues

A dismal universal hiss, the sound

Of public scorn; he wonderd, but not long

Had leasure, wondring at himself now more; [ 510 ]

His Visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,

His Armes clung to his Ribs, his Leggs entwining

Each other, till supplanted down he fell

A monstrous Serpent on his Belly prone,

Reluctant, but in vaine: a greater power [ 515 ]

Now rul'd him, punisht in the shape he sin'd,

According to his doom: he would have spoke,

But hiss for hiss returnd with forked tongue

To forked tongue, for now were all transform'd

Alike, to Serpents all as accessories [ 520 ]

To his bold Riot.

**The Lamentation of Glumdalclitch for the Loss of Grildrig: A Pastoral**

By Alexander Pope

SOON as Glumdalclitch miss’d her pleasing care,

She wept, she blubber’d, and she tore her hair;

No British miss sincerer grief has known,

Her squirrel missing, or her sparrow flown.

She furl’d her sampler, and haul’d in her thread, 5

And stuck her needle into Grildrig’s bed;

Then spread her hands, and with a bounce let fall

Her baby, like the giant in Guildhall.

In peals of thunder now she roars, and now

She gently whimpers like a lowing cow: 10

Yet lovely in her sorrow still appears:

Her locks dishevell’d, and her flood of tears,

Seem like the lofty barn of some rich swain,

When from the thatch drips fast a shower of rain.

In vain she search’d each cranny of the house, 15

Each gaping chink, impervious to a mouse.

‘Was it for this (she cried) with daily care

Within thy reach I set the vinegar,

And fill’d the cruet with the acid tide,

While pepper-water worms thy bait supplied? 20

Where twined the silver eel around thy hook,

And all the little monsters of the brook!

Sure in that lake he dropt; my Grilly’s drown’d!’

She dragg’d the cruet, but no Grildrig found.

‘Vain is thy courage, Grilly, vain thy boast! 25

But little creatures enterprise the most.

Trembling I ’ve seen thee dare the kitten’s paw,

Nay, mix with children, as they play’d at taw,

Nor fear the marbles as they bounding flew;

Marbles to them, but rolling rocks to you! 30

‘Why did I trust thee with that giddy youth?

Who from a page can ever learn the truth?

Versed in court tricks, that money-loving boy

To some lord’s daughter sold the living toy;

Or rent him limb from limb in cruel play, 35

As children tear the wings of flies away.

From place to place o’er Brobdingnag I ’ll roam,

And never will return, or bring thee home.

But who hath eyes to trace the passing wind?

How then they fairy footsteps can I find? 40

Dost thou bewilder’d wander all alone

In the green thicket of a mossy stone;

Or, tumbled from the toadstool’s slipp’ry round,

Perhaps, all maim’d, lie grovelling on the ground

Dost thou, embosom’d in the lovely rose, 45

Or, sunk within the peach’s down repose?

Within the kingcup if thy limbs are spread,

Or in the golden cowslip’s velvet head,

O show me, Flora, midst those sweets, the flower

Where sleeps my Grildrig in the fragrant bower. 50

‘But ah! I fear thy little fancy roves

On little females, and on little loves;

Thy pigmy children, and thy tiny spouse,

The baby playthings that adorn thy house,

Doors, windows, chimneys, and the spacious rooms, 55

Equal in size to cells of honeycombs.

Hast thou for these now ventured from the shore,

Thy bark a bean shell, and a straw thy oar?

Or in thy box now bounding on the main,

Shall I ne’er bear thyself and house again? 60

And shall I set thee on my hand no more,

To see thee leap the lines, and traverse o’er

My spacious palm; of stature scarce a span,

Mimic the actions of a real man?

No more behold thee turn my watch’s key, 65

As seamen at a capstan anchors weigh?

How wert thou wont to walk with cautious tread,

A dish of tea, like milkpail, on thy head!

How chase the mite that bore thy cheese away,

And keep the rolling maggot at a bay!’ 70

She spoke; but broken accents stopp’d her voice,

Soft as the speaking-trumpet’s mellow noise:

She sobb’d a storm, and wiped her flowing eyes,

Which seem’d like two broad suns in misty skies.

O squander not thy grief! those tears command 75

To weep upon our cod in Newfoundland;

The plenteous pickle shall preserve the fish,

And Europe taste thy sorrows in a dish.

**On The Medusa Of Leonardo Da Vinci,**

**In The Florentine Gallery**

By Percy Bysshe Shelley

I T lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,

Upon the cloudy mountain peak supine;

Below, far lands are seen tremblingly;

Its horror and its beauty are divine.

Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie 5

Loveliness like a shadow, from which shrine,

Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,

The agonies of anguish and of death.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace

Which turns the gazer's spirit into stone; 10

Whereon the lineaments of that dead face

Are graven, till the characters be grown

Into itself, and thought no more can trace;

'Tis the melodious hue of beauty thrown

Athwart the darkness and the glare of pain, 15

Which humanize and harmonize the strain.

And from its head as from one body grow,

As [ ] grass out of a watery rock,

Hairs which are vipers, and they curl and flow

And their long tangles in each other lock, 20

And with unending involutions shew

Their mailed radiance, as it were to mock

The torture and the death within, and saw

The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

And from a stone beside, a poisonous eft 25

Peeps idly into those Gorgonian eyes;

Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft

Of sense, has flitted with a mad surprise

Out of the cave this hideous light had cleft,

And he comes hastening like a moth that hies 30

After a taper; and the midnight sky

Flares, a light more dread than obscurity.

'Tis the tempestuous loveliness of terror;

For from the serpents gleams a brazen glare

Kindled by that inextricable error, 35

Which makes a thrilling vapour of the air

Become a [ ] and ever-shifting mirror

Of all the beauty and the terror there-

A woman's countenance, with serpent locks,

Gazing in death on heaven from those wet rocks. 40

Florence, 1819.

**The Kraken**

By Alfred Lord Tennyson

Below the thunders of the upper deep,

Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,

His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep

The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sunlights flee

About his shadowy sides; above him swell

Huge sponges of millennial growth and height;

And far away into the sickly light,

From many a wondrous grot and secret cell

Unnumbered and enormous polypi

Winnow with giant arms the slumbering green.

There hath he lain for ages, and will lie

Battening upon huge sea worms in his sleep,

Until the latter fire shall heat the deep;

Then once by man and angels to be seen,

In roaring he shall rise and on the surface die.

**The Shadow on the Stone**

By Thomas Hardy

I went by the Druid stone

That broods in the garden white and lone,

And I stopped and looked at the shifting shadows

That at some moments fall thereon

From the tree hard by with a rhythmic swing,

And they shaped in my imagining

To the shade that a well-known head and shoulders

Threw there when she was gardening.

I thought her behind my back,

Yea, her I long had learned to lack,

And I said: ‘I am sure you are standing behind me,

Though how do you get into this old track?’

And there was no sound but the fall of a leaf

As a sad response; and to keep down grief

I would not turn my head to discover

That there was nothing in my belief.

Yet I wanted to look and see

That nobody stood at the back of me;

But I thought once more: ‘Nay, I’ll not unvision

A shape which, somehow, there may be.’

So I went on softly from the glade,

And left her behind me throwing her shade,

As she were indeed an apparition—

My head unturned lest my dream should fade.

**The Snowman on the Moor**

By Sylvia Plath

Stalemated their armies stood, with tottering banners:

She flung from a room

Still ringing with bruit of insults and dishonors

And in fury left him

Glowering at the coal-fire: ‘Come find me’—her last taunt.

He did not come

But sat on, guarding his grim battlement.

By the doorstep

Her winter-beheaded daisies, marrowless, gaunt,

Warned her to keep

Indoors with politic goodwill, not haste

Into a landscape

Of stark wind-harrowed hills and weltering mist;

But from the house

She stalked intractable as a driven ghost

Across moor snows

Pocked by rock-claw and rabbit-track: she must yet win

Him to his knees—

Let him send police and hounds to bring her in.

Nursing her rage

Through bare whistling heather, over stiles of black stone,

To the world's white edge

She came, and called hell to subdue an unruly man

And join her siege.

It was no fire-blurting fork-tailed demon

Volcanoed hot

From marble snow-heap of moor to ride that woman

With spur and knout

Down from pride's size: instead, a grisly-thewed,

Austere, corpse-white

Giant heaved into the distance, stone-hatcheted,

Sky-high, and snow

Floured his whirling beard, and at his tread

Ambushed birds by

Dozens dropped dead in the hedges: o she felt

No love in his eye,

Worse—saw dangling from that spike-studded belt

Ladies' sheaved skulls:

Mournfully the dry tongues clacked their guilt:

‘Our wit made fools

Of kings, unmanned kings' sons: our masteries

Amused court halls:

For that brag, we barnacle these iron thighs.’

Throned in the thick

Of a blizzard, the giant roared up with his chittering trophies.

From brunt of axe-crack

She shied sideways: a white fizz! and the giant, pursuing,

Crumbled to smoke.

Humbled then, and crying,

The girl bent homeward, brimful of gentle talk

And mild obeying.

**Dear Dr. Frankenstein**

By Jericho Brown

I, too, know the science of building men

Out of fragments in little light

Where I'll be damned if lightning don't

Strike as I forget one

May have a thief's thumb,

Another, a murderer's arm,

And watch the men I've made leave

Like an idea I meant to write down,

Like a vehicle stuck

In reverse, like the monster

God came to know the moment

Adam named animals and claimed

Eve, turning from heaven to her

As if she was his

To run. No word he said could be tamed.

No science. No design. Nothing taken

Gently into his hand or your hand or mine,

Nothing we erect is our own.

**Group Home Before Miss Edna's House**

By Jacqueline Woodson

The monsters that come at night don't

breathe fire, have two heads or long claws.

The monsters that come at night don't

come bloody and half-dead and calling your name.

They come looking like regular boys

going through your drawers and pockets saying

You better not tell Counselor else I'll beat you down.

The monsters that come at night snatch

the covers off your bed, take your

pillow and in the morning

steal your bacon when the cook's back is turned

call themselves The Throwaway Boys, say

You one of us now.

When the relatives stop coming

When you don't know where your sister is anymore

When every sign around you says

Group Home Rules: Don't

do this and don't do that

until it sinks in one rainy Saturday afternoon

while you're sitting at the Group Home window

reading a beat-up Group Home book,

wearing a Group Home hand-me-down shirt

hearing all the Group Home loudness, that

you are a Throwaway Boy.

And the news just sits in your stomach

hard and heavy as Group Home food.

**The Godzilla Sestina**

By Bao Phi

Under the ocean where I was created

in a womb of dancing atoms, a tectonic tale

is breaking the skin of sea floor. Dreams burn here:

lava flows underwater like bleeding fireballs,

sunless sleep disturbed as they listened

for the sound of the nightmares they dropped.

Fat Man and the Little Boy drop,

like two suns tumbling, sent to destroy creation,

no one will be left alive to listen

for the lessons we need to learn from this tale,

just a skyline made of a blossoming fireball

and a symphony of silenced screams horrible beyond hearing.

So I’m born, a radiating thunder lizard, here

to crush American Dreams as my footfalls drop

like apocalypse, and from my lips a chorus of fireballs

razes all that you have created

like runaway rays of sun, my tail

too large to fit in your streets, listen

to see if your superheroes will sing if no one listens,

their words so tired that no one hears,

flag colored costumes useless in this tale.

Look at the sky for God, for an answer, to see if black rain

drops,

to see this towering monster created

by the heat of a million rabid fireballs

unleashed on a people turned to ash by the fire, balled

fists and screams evaporated while history listens.

Now I loom, people scramble in my jagged eclipse, the

penumbra I created

is shaped like the ghost of the Enola Gay flying across the

moon. Here,

I will illuminate your whispered crimes as the indigo of

night drops

before your story is fully told.

Children will sleep trembling under my tail,

the threat of my story like a guillotine of fireballs,

a sharp string of ghastly stars waiting to drop

because even before this lesson, they should have listened,

before we came to this, they should have heard,

they should have known what would be created.

I speak english in this tale, but they don’t listen,

so I speak in fireballs, the language they hear,

the nightmare they dropped, the monster they created.