

Poetry Project

Write 5 poems.

Each poem should **attempt devices/syntax/tone/style that you see used in one of the poems below**. (Doesn't not have to be all of them. Those are options.

(Formatting is due to copy/paste issues-none of the double-spacing is in the originals.)

Choose one poem to emulate for each poem you write.

Do not emulate any of the options more than once.

Put all poems in one document. Label it First Initial Last Name Emulation

- For each poem, specify which **poem** you are emulating
 - **(Type the title at the top of the poem)**
- For each poem, specify which **poetic devices** you are trying to emulate.
 - **(Write a bulleted list below each poem you write. Be specific.)**
- Give each poem you write a **title**. (It's your baby!)
- Each poem should be polished in terms of **diction** and **mechanics**.

You will be presenting at least two of them in class when I return.

Options to emulate are shown below. Chose only 5, one for each of your emulations.

1. My Papa's Waltz-Theodore Roethke

The whiskey on your breath

Could make a small boy dizzy;

But I hung on like death:

Such waltzing was not easy.

We romped until the pans

Slid from the kitchen shelf;

My mother's countenance

Could not unfrown itself.

The hand that held my wrist
Was battered on one knuckle;
At every step you missed
My right ear scraped a buckle.
You beat time on my head
With a palm caked hard by dirt,
Then waltzed me off to bed
Still clinging to your shirt.

2. The Other World-Robert Wrigley

So here is the old buck
who all winter long
had traveled with the does
and yearlings, with the fawns
just past their spots,
and who had hung back,
walking where the others had walked,
eating what they had left,
and who had struck now and then
a pose against the wind,
against a twig-snap or the way
the light came slinking
among the trees.

Here is the mangled ear
and the twisted, hindering leg.
Here, already bearing him away
among the last drifts of snow
and the nightly hard freezes,
is a line of tiny ants,
making its way from the cave
of the right eye, over the steep

occipital ridge, across the moonscape, shed-horn
medallion and through the valley
of the ear's cloven shadow
to the ground,
where among the staves
of shed needles and the red earthy wine
they carry him
bit by gnawn bit
into another world.

3. Highway 12, Just East of Paradise, Idaho

-Robert Wrigley

The doe, at a dead run, was dead
the instant the truck hit her.
In the headlights I saw her tongue
extend and her eyes go shocked and vacant.
Launched at a sudden right angle—say
from twenty miles per hour south to fifty
miles per hour east—she skated
many yards on the slightest toe-edge tips
of her dainty deer hooves, then fell
slowly, inside the speed of her new trajectory,
not pole-axed but stunned, away
from me and the truck's decelerating pitch.
She skidded along the right lane's
fog line true as a cue ball,
until her neck caught a signpost
that spun her across both lanes and out of sight
beyond the edge. For which, I admit, I was grateful,
the road there being dark, narrow, and shoulderless,
and home, with its lights, not far away

4. Old Lem - Sterling Brown

I talked to old Lem

and old Lem said:
"They weigh the cotton
They store the corn
We only good enough
To work the rows;
They run the commissary
They keep the books
We gotta be grateful
For being cheated;
Whippersnapper clerks
Call us out of our name
We got to say mister
To spindling boys
They make our figgers
Turn somersets
We buck in the middle
Say, "Thankyuh, sah."
They don't come by ones
They don't come by twos
But they come by tens.
They got the judges
They got the lawyers
They got the jury-rolls
They got the law
They don't come by ones
They got the sheriffs
They got the deputies
They don't come by twos
They got the shotguns
They got the rope
We git the justice
In the end
And they come by tens.
Their fists stay closed
Their eyes look straight
Our hands stay open
Our eyes must fall
They don't come by ones
They got the manhood

They got the courage
They don't come by twos
We got to slink around
Hangtailed hounds.
They burn us when we dogs
They burn us when we men
They come by tens ...
I had a buddy
Six foot of man
Muscled up perfect
Game to the heart
They don't come by ones
Outworked and outfought
Any man or two men
They don't come by twos
He spoke out of turn
At the commissary
They gave him a day
To git out the county
He didn't take it.
He said 'Come and get me.'
They came and got him
And they came by tens.
He stayed in the county –
He lays there dead.
They don't come by ones
They don't come by twos
But they come by tens."

5. Elegy for Jane

(My student, thrown by a horse) -Theodore Roethke

I remember the neckcurls, limp and damp as tendrils;
And her quick look, a sidelong pickerel smile;
And how, once startled into talk, the light syllables leaped for her,
And she balanced in the delight of her thought,

A wren, happy, tail into the wind,
Her song trembling the twigs and small branches.
The shade sang with her;
The leaves, their whispers turned to kissing,
And the mould sang in the bleached valleys under the rose.
Oh, when she was sad, she cast herself down into such a pure depth,
Even a father could not find her:
Scraping her cheek against straw,
Stirring the clearest water.
My sparrow, you are not here,
Waiting like a fern, making a spiney shadow.
The sides of wet stones cannot console me,
Nor the moss, wound with the last light.
If only I could nudge you from this sleep,
My maimed darling, my skittery pigeon.
Over this damp grave I speak the words of my love:
I, with no rights in this matter,
Neither father nor lover.

6. Cloud-Sandra Cisneros

"If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper."

-Thich Nhat Hanh

Before you became a cloud, you were an ocean, roiled and
murmuring like a mouth.

You were the shadows of a cloud cross-
ing over a field of tulips.

You were the tears of a man who cried
into a plaid handkerchief.

You were the sky without a hat.

Your
heart puffed and flowered like sheets drying on a line.

And when you were a tree, you listened to the trees and the tree
things trees told you.

You were the wind in the wheels of a red
bicycle.

You were the spidery Maria tattooed on the hairless arm
of a boy in downtown Houston.

You were the rain rolling off the
waxy leaves of a magnolia tree.

A lock of straw-colored hair
wedged between the mottled pages of a Victor Hugo novel.

A
crescent of soap.

A spider the color of a fingernail.

The black nets
beneath the sea of olive trees.

A skein of blue wool.

A tea saucer

wrapped in newspaper.

An empty cracker tin.

A bowl of blueber-

ries in heavy cream.

White wine in a green-stemmed glass.

And when you opened your wings to wind, across the punched-tin sky above a prison
courtyard, those condemned to death and
those condemned to life watched how smooth and sweet a white
cloud glides.

7. Miss Rosie-Lucille Clifton

When I watch you
wrapped up like garbage
sitting, surrounded by the smell
of too old potato peels
or
when I watch you
in your old man's shoes
with the little toe cut out
sitting, waiting for your mind
like next week's grocery
I say
when I watch you
you wet brown bag of a woman
who used to be the best looking gal in Georgia
used to be called the Georgia Rose

I stand up
through your destruction
I stand up

8. Love Poem for a Non-Believer-Sandra Cisneros
Because I miss

you I run my hand
along the flat of my thigh
curve of the hip
mango of the ass. Imagine
it your hand across
the thrum of ribs
arpeggio of the breasts
collarbones you adore
that I don't.

My neck is thin

You could cup

it with one hand

Yank the life from me

If you wanted

I've cut my hair

You can't tug

my hair anymore

A jet of black
through the fingers now
Your hands cool
along the jaw
skin of the eyelids
nape of the neck
soft as a mouth
And when we open like apple
split each other in half and
have seen the heart
of the heart
of the heart that part
you don't I don't
show anyone the part
we want to reel
back as soon as it
is suddenly unreeled like silk
flag
or the prayer call
of a Mohammed we won't
have a word for this except
perhaps religion

9. Aimless Love-Billy Collins

This morning as I walked along the lake shore,

I fell in love with a wren

and later in the day with a mouse

the cat had dropped under the dining room table.

In the shadows of an autumn evening,

I fell for a seamstress

still at her machine in the tailor's window,

and later for a bowl of broth,

steam rising like smoke from a naval battle.

This is the best kind of love, I thought,

without recompense, without gifts,

or unkind words, without suspicion,

or silence on the telephone.

The love of the chestnut,

the jazz cap and one hand on the wheel.

No lust, no slam of the door—

the love of the miniature orange tree,
the clean white shirt, the hot evening shower,
the highway that cuts across Florida.
No waiting, no huffiness, or rancor—
just a twinge every now and then
for the wren who had built her nest
on a low branch overhanging the water
and for the dead mouse,
still dressed in its light brown suit.
But my heart is always propped up
in a field on its tripod,
ready for the next arrow.
After I carried the mouse by the tail
to a pile of leaves in the woods,
I found myself standing at the bathroom sink
gazing down affectionately at the soap,
so patient and soluble,
so at home in its pale green soap dish.

I could feel myself falling again
as I felt its turning in my wet hands
and caught the scent of lavender and stone.

10. Stone-Charles Simic

Go inside a stone
That would be my way.
Let somebody else become a dove
Or gnash with a tiger's tooth.
I am happy to be a stone.
From the outside the stone is a riddle:
No one knows how to answer it.
Yet within, it must be cool and quiet
Even though a cow steps on it full weight,
Even though a child throws it in a river;
The stone sinks, slow, unperturbed

To the river bottom

Where the fishes come to knock on it

And listen.

I have seen sparks fly out

When two stones are rubbed,

So perhaps it is not dark inside after all;

Perhaps there is a moon shining

From somewhere, as though behind a hill—

Just enough light to make out

The strange writings, the star-charts

On the inner walls.