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## **A NATURE POEM FOR EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR**

Written by **Jane McMorland-  
Hunter**

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18 JANUARY

## *The Rainbow*

Even the rainbow has a body  
made of drizzling rain  
and it is an architecture of glistening atoms  
built up, built up  
yet you can't lay your hand on it,  
nay, nor even your mind.

D. H. Lawrence (1885–1930)

19 JANUARY

## *Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind*

FROM *AS YOU LIKE IT*, ACT II, SCENE VII

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude;  
Thy tooth is not so keen,  
Because thou art not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude.  
Hey-ho, sing hey-ho, unto the green holly.  
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:  
Then, hey-ho, the holly;  
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,  
That dost not bite so nigh  
As benefits forgot:  
Though thou the waters warp,  
Thy sting is not so sharp  
As friend remembered not.  
Hey-ho, sing hey-ho, unto the green holly.  
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:  
Then, hey-ho, the holly;  
This life is most jolly.

William Shakespeare (1564–1616)



# MARCH

*I Heard a Thousand Blended Notes*

29 JUNE

## *The Bee*

The Pedigree of Honey  
Does not concern the Bee;  
A Clover, any time, to him  
Is Aristocracy.

Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

30 JUNE

## *Verses Written in a Garden*

See how the pair of billing doves  
With open murmurs own their loves;  
And, heedless of censorious eyes,  
Pursue their unpolluted joys:  
No fears of future want molest  
The downy quiet of their nest:  
No interest joined the happy pair,  
Securely blest in Nature's care,  
While her dear dictates they pursue:  
For constancy is nature too.

Can all the doctrine of our schools,  
Our moral maxims, our religious rules,  
Can learning, to our lives ensure  
Virtue so bright, or bliss so pure?  
The great Creator's happy hand  
Virtue and pleasure ever blends:  
In vain the Church and Court have tried  
Th' united essence to divide:  
Alike they find their wild mistake,  
The pedant priest, and giddy rake.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762)

*Song at the Beginning of Autumn*

Now watch this autumn that arrives  
 In smells. All looks like summer still;  
 Colours are quite unchanged, the air  
 On green and white serenely thrives.  
 Heavy the trees with growth and full  
 The fields. Flowers flourish everywhere.

Proust who collected time within  
 A child's cake would understand  
 The ambiguity of this –  
 Summer still raging while a thin  
 Column of smoke stirs from the land  
 Proving that autumn gropes for us.

But every season is a kind  
 Of rich nostalgia. We give names –  
 Autumn and summer, winter, spring –  
 As though to unfasten from the mind  
 Our moods and give them outward forms.  
 We want the certain, solid thing.

But I am carried back against  
 My will into a childhood where  
 Autumn is bonfires, marbles, smoke;  
 I lean against my window fenced  
 From evocations in the air.  
 When I said autumn, autumn broke.

Elizabeth Jennings (1926–2001)

*To Autumn*

O Autumn, laden with fruit, and stained  
 With the blood of the grape, pass not, but sit  
 Beneath my shady roof; there thou may'st rest,  
 And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe,  
 And all the daughters of the year shall dance!  
 Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.

'The narrow bud opens her beauties to  
 The sun, and love runs in her thrilling veins;  
 Blossoms hang round the brows of Morning, and  
 Flourish down the bright cheek of modest Eve,  
 Till clust'ring Summer breaks forth into singing,  
 And feather'd clouds strew flowers round her head.

'The spirits of the air live on the smells  
 Of fruit; and Joy, with pinions light, roves round  
 The gardens, or sits singing in the trees.'  
 Thus sang the jolly Autumn as he sat;  
 Then rose, girded himself, and o'er the bleak  
 Hills fled from our sight; but left his golden load.

William Blake (1757–1827)

9 SEPTEMBER

## *Autumn Walk*

FROM TALES OF THE HALL, BOOK IV, THE ADVENTURES OF RICHARD

It was a fair and mild autumnal sky,  
And earth's ripe treasures met th' admiring eye,  
As a rich beauty, when her bloom is lost,  
Appears with more magnificence and cost:  
The wet and heavy grass, where feet had stray'd,  
Not yet erect, the wanderer's way betray'd:  
Showers of the night had swell'd the deep'ning rill,  
The morning breeze had urged the quick'ning mill,  
Assembled rooks had wing'd their sea-ward flight,  
By the same passage to return at night.  
While proudly o'er them hung the steady kite,  
Then turn'd him back, and left the noisy throng,  
Nor deign'd to know them as he sail'd along.  
Long yellow leaves, from oziers, strew'd around,  
Choked the small stream, and hush'd the feeble sound,  
While the dead foliage dropt from loftier trees.

George Crabbe (1754–1832)

10 SEPTEMBER

## *A Narrow Fellow in the Grass*

A narrow Fellow in the Grass  
Occasionally rides –  
You may have met Him – did you not  
His notice sudden is –

The Grass divides as with a Comb –  
A spotted shaft is seen –  
And then it closes at your feet  
And opens further on –

He likes a Boggy Acre  
A Floor too cool for Corn –  
But when a Boy, and Barefoot –  
I more than once at Noon

Have passed, I thought, a Whip lash  
Unbraiding in the Sun  
When stooping to secure it  
It wrinkled, and was gone –

Several of Nature's People  
I know, and they know me –  
I feel for them a transport  
Of cordiality –

But never met this Fellow  
Attended, or alone  
Without a tighter breathing  
And Zero at the Bone.

Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

*Inversnaid*

This darksome burn, horseback brown,  
 His rollrock highroad roaring down,  
 In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam  
 Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-fróth  
 Turns and twindles over the broth  
 Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,  
 It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew  
 And the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,  
 Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern,  
 And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft  
 Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,  
 O let them be left, wildness and wet;  
 Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–1889)

*Autumn Mist*

So thick a mist hung over all,  
 Rain had no room to fall;  
 It seemed a sea without a shore;  
 The cobwebs drooped heavy and hoar  
 As though with wool they had been knit;  
 Too obvious mark for fly to hit!

And though the sun was somewhere else  
 The gloom had brightness of its own  
 That shone on bracken, grass and stone  
 And mole-mound with its broken shells  
 That told where squirrel lately sat,  
 Cracked hazel-nuts and ate the fat.

And sullen haws in hedgerows  
 Burned in the damp with clearer fire;  
 and brighter still than those  
 The scarlet hips hung on the briar  
 Like coffins of the dead dog-rose;  
 All were as bright as though for earth  
 Death were a gayer thing than birth.

Andrew Young (1885–1971)