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Poems

**Leisure**
What is this life, if full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?
No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows,
No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
No time to see in broad daylight
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.
No time to turn at beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.
No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began,
A poor life this is, if full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

*W.H. Davies*

**Ants in the Lunchroom**
Appearing this morning exactly at nine
They entered our lunchroom and mustered a line.
They seemed to be dancing, or whistling a tune,
Then ran out the door with a fork and a spoon.
They quickly came back for a knife and a plate
Not bothered at all by the size or the weight.
They grabbed all the glasses and cups they could find.
They bagged every bowl, leaving nothing behind.
They worked through the morning, till mid-afternoon,
And carried off every last saucer and spoon.
They searched every shelf and they emptied each drawer,
Then pilfered the platters and dashed out the door.
They put on a truly impressive display
Until they were finished and wandered away.
Although we were puzzled, we had to conclude
Those ants were no dummies; they left all the food.

*Kenn Nesbitt*
Calendar of Clothes

January is a time for coats, for caps and fir-lined boots.
February likes hats with flaps and zipped up coloured ski suits.
March can do with anoraks and jeans and wooly tops.
April needs a change of clothes for sun and wind and raindrops.
May brings cotton tee-shirts with jumpers still on hand.

By June the skirts are skimpy, shorts short for playing on sand.
July comes along in bathing trunks, and caps with dark green shades.
August gets the sunsuits out with balls and buckets and spades.

September, and it's back to school, uniform, shirt and stripy tie.
October brings scarves out again as leaves whirl up in the sky.
November means turned-up collars against wind and fog and storm.
December shakes out party frocks.
Christmas fun keeps everyone warm.

Moira Andrew

***

I meant to do my work today -
But a brown bird sang in the apple tree,
And a butterfly flitted across the field,
And the wind went sighing over the land
Tossing the grasses to and fro,
And a rainbow helped out its shining hand -
So what could I do out: laugh and go?

Richard Le Yalleinne

Silver

Slowly, silently, now the moon
Walks the night in her silver shoon;
This way, and that, she peers, and sees
Silver fruit upon silver trees,
One by one the casements catch
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch;
Couched in his kennel, like a log,
With paws of silver sleeps the dog;
From their shadowy cote the white breasts peep
Of doves in a silver - feathered sleep;
A harvest mouse goes scampering by
With silver claims and silver eye  
And moveless fish in the water gleam,  
By silver reeds in a silver stream.  

*Walter de la More*

**There's a Monster in My Mirror**  
There's a monster in my mirror,  
With two beady yellow eyes.  
Since I first awoke this morning,  
It's been there to my surprise.  
It's as wrinkled as a rhino.  
It's hairy as a hound.  
And from deep within its beauty  
Comes a groaning, moaning sound.  
Its long teeth are sharp and pointed,  
Its fat tongue is shaded blue.  
And its mouth is drooling liquid  
That resembles airplane glue.  
There's a monster in my mirror,  
With green horns upon its head.  
Tell that monster in my mirror  
That I'm going back to bed!  

*Douglas Florian*

**When I Was One-and-Twenty**  
When I was one-and-twenty  
I heard a wise man say,  
"Give crowns, and pounds, and guineas  
But not your heart away;  
Give pearls away and rubies  
But keep your fancy free."  
But I was one-and-twenty  
No use to talk to me.  
When I was one-and-twenty  
I heard him say again,  
"The heart out the bosom  
Was never given in vain;  
'It's paid with sighs a plenty  
And sold for endless rue."
And I was two-and-twenty,
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.
A.E. Housman

Hand
Away from you, I hold hands with the air,
Your imagined untouchable hand. Not there,
Your fingers braid with mine as I walk.
Far away in my heart, you start to talk.
I squeeze the air, kicking the auburn leaves,
Everything suddenly gold. I half believe
Your hand is holding mine, the way
It would if you were here. What do you say?
In my heart? I bend my head to listen, then feel
Your hand reaches out and strokes my hair, as real
As the wind caressing the fretful trees above.
Now I can hear you clearly, speaking of love.

Carol Ann Duffy

The Snowman
He shines like a candle and melts slowly.
He is white and black and gets smaller all the time.
He is as white as feathers and white horses and snow
He glows in the dark like a glow-worm
He stands on a flat place and makes a shadow in the light.
He crumples in a circle like a circus tent.
He turns to ice and slush like a camel's hump.
He runs away like milk and melts like moonlight in the sunshine.
In the morning he is gone like the moon.

Gillian Clarke

Shoes
My father has a pair of shoes
So beautiful to see!
I want to wear my father's shoes,
They are too big for me.
My baby's brother has a pair,
As cunning as can be!
My feet won't go into that pair,
They are too small for me.
There's only one thing I can do
Till I get small or grown.
If I want to have a fitting shoe,
I'll have to wear my own.

Tom Robinson

Mice
I think mice are rather nice.
Their tails are long, their faces small,
They haven't got any chins at all.
Their ears are pink, their teeth are white.
They run about the house at night.
They nibble things they shouldn't touch
And no one seems to like them much.
But I think mice are very nice.

Rose Tyleman

The Brook Song
Little brook! Little brook!
You have such a happy look,
Such a very merry manner,
As you swerve and curve and crook.
And you ripple, one and one.
Reach each other's hands and run
Like laughing children in the sun!
For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins:
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins:
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

Л.С. Swinburne

***

I would I were a careless child,
Still dwelling in my Highland cave,
Or roaming through the dusky wild,
Or bounding o'er the dark blue wave.
The cumbrous pomp of Saxon pride
Accords not with the tree-born soul,
Which loves the mountain's craggy side,
And seeks the rocks where billows roll.
Fortune! take back these cultures lands,
Take back this name of splendid sound!
I hate the touch of servile hands,
I hate the slaves that cringe around.
Place me among the rocks Hove,
Which sound to Ocean's wildest roar;
I ask but this - again to rove
Through scenes my youth hath known before.

George Gordon Byron