

1. Amelia Rylak (Virginia)

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**Hymn to the Night**  
**By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

*Aspasie, trillistos.*

I heard the trailing garments of the Night

Sweep through her marble halls!

I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light

From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,

Stoop o'er me from above;

The calm, majestic presence of the Night,

As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,

The manifold, soft chimes,

That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,

Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air

My spirit drank repose;

The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—

From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear

What man has borne before!

Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care

And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!

Descend with broad-winged flight,

The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,

The best-beloved Night!

2. Joy Ogunsakin (New Jersey)

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**Blues Fantasy**  
**By Langston Hughes**

Hey! Hey!

That's what the

Blues singers say.

Singing minor melodies

They laugh,

Hey! Hey!

My man's done left me,

Chile, he's gone away.

My good man's left me,

Babe, he's gone away.

Now the cryin' blues

Haunts me night and day.

Hey! . . . Hey!

Weary,

Weary,

Trouble, pain.

Sun's gonna shine

Somewhere

Again.

I got a railroad ticket,

Pack my trunk and ride.

Sing 'em, sister!

Got a railroad ticket,

Pack my trunk and ride.

And when I get on the train

I'll cast my blues aside.

Laughing,

Hey! . . . Hey!

Laugh a loud,

Hey! Hey!

3. Gülse Polat (West Virginia)

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**A Suggested Campaign Song  
By Alice Duer Miller**

("No brass bands. No speeches. Instead a still, silent, effective influence."—*Anti-suffrage speech*.)

We are waging—can you doubt it?

A campaign so calm and still

No one knows a thing about it

And we hope they never will.

No one knows

What we oppose,

And we hope they never will.

We are ladylike and quiet,

Here a whisper—there a hint;

Never speeches, bands or riot,

Nothing suitable for print.

No one knows

What we oppose,

For we never speak for print.

Sometimes in profound seclusion,

In some far (but homelike) spot,  
We will make a dark allusion:  
“We’re opposed to you-know-what.”  
No one knows  
What we oppose,  
For we call it “You-Know-What.”

4. Xariel Banton (Pennsylvania)

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**Conscience**  
**By Henry David Thoreau**

Conscience is instinct bred in the house,  
Feeling and Thinking propagate the sin  
By an unnatural breeding in and in.  
I say, Turn it out doors,  
Into the moors.  
I love a life whose plot is simple,  
And does not thicken with every pimple,  
A soul so sound no sickly conscience binds it,  
That makes the universe no worse than 't finds it.  
I love an earnest soul,  
Whose mighty joy and sorrow  
Are not drowned in a bowl,  
And brought to life to-morrow  
That lives one tragedy,  
And not seventy;  
A conscience worth keeping,  
Laughing not weeping;

A conscience wise and steady,  
And for ever ready;  
Not changing with events,  
Dealing in compliments;  
A conscience exercised about  
Large things, where one may doubt.  
I love a soul not all of wood,  
Predestinated to be good,  
But true to the backbone  
Unto itself alone,  
And false to none;  
Born to its own affairs,  
Its own joys and own cares;  
By whom the work which God begun  
Is finished, and not undone;  
Taken up where he left off,  
Whether to worship or to scoff;  
If not good, why then evil,  
If not good god, good devil.  
Goodness!—you hypocrite, come out of that,  
Live your life, do your work, then take your hat.  
I have no patience towards  
Such conscientious cowards.

Give me simple laboring folk,  
Who love their work,  
Whose virtue is a song  
To cheer God along.

5. Joeltica Rogers (U.S. Virgin Islands)

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**The Coming Woman**  
**By Mary Weston Fordham**

Just look, 'tis quarter past six, love—

And not even the fires are caught;

Well, you know I must be at the office—

But, as usual, the breakfast 'll be late.

Now hurry and wake up the children;

And dress them as fast as you can;

'Poor dearies,' I know they'll be tardy,

Dear me, 'what a slow, poky man!'

Have the tenderloin broiled nice and juicy—

Have the toast browned and buttered all right;

And be sure you settle the coffee:

Be sure that the silver is bright.

When ready, just run up and call me—

At eight, to the office I go,

Lest poverty, grim, should o’ertake us—

‘Tis bread and butter,’ you know.

The bottom from stocks may fall out,

My bonds may get below par;

Then surely, I seldom could spare you

A nickel, to buy a cigar.

All ready? Now, while I am eating,

Just bring up my wheel to the door;

Then wash up the dishes; and, mind now,

Have dinner promptly at four;

For tonight is our Woman’s Convention,

And I am to speak first, you know—

The men veto us in private,

But in public they shout, ‘That’s so.’

So ‘by-by’ – In case of a rap, love,

Before opening the door, you must look;

O! how could a civilized woman

Exist, without a man cook.

6. Summer Lin Brackett (New Hampshire)

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**Lenore**  
**By Edgar Allan Poe**

Ah broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown forever!  
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;  
And, Guy De Vere, hast *thou* no tear?—weep now or never more!  
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!  
Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song be sung!—  
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young—  
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

“Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her pride,  
“And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—that she died!  
“How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how be sung  
“By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the slanderous tongue  
“That did to death the innocent that died, and died so young?”

*Peccavimus*; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song  
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel so wrong!  
The sweet Lenore hath “gone before,” with Hope, that flew beside

Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been thy bride—  
For her, the fair and *debonair*, that now so lowly lies,  
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes—  
The life still there, upon her hair—the death upon her eyes.

“Avaunt! to-night my heart is light. No dirge will I upraise,  
“But waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan of old days!  
“Let *no* bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its hallowed mirth,  
“Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the damnéd Earth.  
“To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant ghost is riven—  
“From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven—  
“From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of Heaven.”

7. Astrid Santos (Rhode Island)

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**Aunt Sue's Stories**  
**By Langston Hughes**

Aunt Sue has a head full of stories.

Aunt Sue has a whole heart full of stories.

Summer nights on the front porch

Aunt Sue cuddles a brown-faced child to her bosom

And tells him stories.

Black slaves

Working in the hot sun,

And black slaves

Walking in the dewy night,

And black slaves

Singing sorrow songs on the banks of a mighty river

Mingle themselves softly

In the flow of old Aunt Sue's voice,

Mingle themselves softly

In the dark shadows that cross and recross

Aunt Sue's stories.

And the dark-faced child, listening,  
Knows that Aunt Sue's stories are real stories.  
He knows that Aunt Sue  
Never got her stories out of any book at all,  
But that they came  
Right out of her own life.

And the dark-faced child is quiet  
Of a summer night  
Listening to Aunt Sue's stories.

8. Eason M. DeMarsico-Thorne (Vermont)

---

**Fruit of the Flower**  
**By Countee Cullen**

My father is a quiet man

With sober, steady ways;

For simile, a folded fan;

His nights are like his days.

My mother's life is puritan,

No hint of cavalier,

A pool so calm you're sure it can

Have little depth to fear.

And yet my father's eyes can boast

How full his life has been;

There haunts them yet the languid ghost

Of some still sacred sin.

And though my mother chants of God,

And of the mystic river,

I've seen a bit of checkered sod

Set all her flesh aquiver.

Why should he deem it pure mischance

A son of his is fain

To do a naked tribal dance

Each time he hears the rain?

Why should she think it devil's art

That all my songs should be

Of love and lovers, broken heart,

And wild sweet agony?

Who plants a seed begets a bud,

Extract of that same root;

Why marvel at the hectic blood

That flushes this wild fruit?

9. Sarah Seidu (Ohio)

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**It Was Not Fate**  
**By William H. A. Moore**

It was not fate which overtook me,  
Rather a wayward, wilful wind  
That blew hot for awhile  
And then, as the even shadows came, blew cold.  
What pity it is that a man grown old in life's dreaming  
Should stop, e'en for a moment, to look into a woman's eyes.  
And I forgot!  
Forgot that one's heart must be steeled against the east wind.  
Life and death alike come out of the East:  
Life as tender as young grass,  
Death as dreadful as the sight of clotted blood.  
I shall go back into the darkness,  
Not to dream but to seek the light again.  
I shall go by paths, mayhap,  
On roads that wind around the foothills  
Where the plains are bare and wild  
And the passers-by come few and far between.

I want the night to be long, the moon blind.  
The hills thick with moving memories,  
And my heart beating a breathless requiem  
For all the dead days I have lived.  
When the Dawn comes—Dawn, deathless, dreaming—  
I shall will that my soul must be cleansed of hate,  
I shall pray for strength to hold children close to my heart,  
I shall desire to build houses where the poor will know  
    shelter, comfort, beauty.  
And then may I look into a woman's eyes  
And find holiness, love and the peace which passeth understanding.

10. Caliyah McCall (North Carolina)

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**Militants to Certain Other Women**  
**By Katharine Rolston Fisher**

You who pass coldly by when the police rush upon us,  
When they wrench away our banners,  
(Beautiful banners whose colors cry a demand for liberty)  
You who criticize or condemn  
(Declaring you “believe in suffrage,  
Worked for it in your state, and your mother  
knew Susan B. Anthony”)  
Can you think in terms of a nation?  
Could you die, (or face ridicule) for your belief?  
For the freedom of women, for your freedom,  
we are fighting;  
For your safety we face danger, bear torture;  
For your honor endure untellable insult.  
To win democracy for you we defend the banners of democracy  
Till our banners and our bodies  
Are flung together on the pavement,  
Waiting at the gates of government,

We have made of our weariness a symbol  
Of women's long wait for justice.  
We have borne the hunger and hardship of prison,  
To open people's eyes  
To men's determination to imprison the power of women.  
You women who pass coldly by,  
Do you imagine your freedom is coming  
As a summer wind blows over fields?  
Slowly it has advanced by a sixty-years' war,  
(Those who have fought in it have not forgotten)  
And that war is not won.  
Strongly entrenched, the foe sits plotting.  
Close to his lines our banners fly,  
Signalling where to direct the fire,  
Greater forces are needed, reserves and recruits.  
Are you for winning or for waiting,  
Women who watch the banners go down?  
Women who say, "Suffrage is coming,"  
While suffrage goes by you into Prussia?  
Cease to be content with applauding speeches, and praising politicians.  
Patience is shameful.  
Awake, rise, and act.

11. Oona Borovicka (South Carolina)

---

**Elegy Before Death**  
**By Edna St. Vincent Millay**

There will be rose and rhododendron

When you are dead and under ground;

Still will be heard from white syringas

Heavy with bees, a sunny sound;

Still will the tamaracks be raining

After the rain has ceased, and still

Will there be robins in the stubble,

Brown sheep upon the warm green hill.

Spring will not ail nor autumn falter;

Nothing will know that you are gone,

Saving alone some sullen plough-land

None but yourself sets foot upon;

Saving the may-weed and the pig-weed

Nothing will know that you are dead,—

These, and perhaps a useless wagon

Standing beside some tumbled shed.

Oh, there will pass with your great passing

Little of beauty not your own,—

Only the light from common water,

Only the grace from simple stone!

12. Natalia Gatti (Delaware)

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When they wrench away our banners,  
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Awake, rise, and act.

13. Nyla Dinkins (District of Columbia)

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**Learning to Read**  
**By Frances Ellen Watkins Harper**

Very soon the Yankee teachers  
    Came down and set up school;  
But, oh! how the Rebs did hate it,—  
    It was agin' their rule.

Our masters always tried to hide  
    Book learning from our eyes;  
Knowledge did'nt agree with slavery—  
    'Twould make us all too wise.

But some of us would try to steal  
    A little from the book.  
And put the words together,  
    And learn by hook or crook.

I remember Uncle Caldwell,  
    Who took pot liquor fat

And greased the pages of his book,  
And hid it in his hat.

And had his master ever seen  
The leaves upon his head,  
He'd have thought them greasy papers,  
But nothing to be read.

And there was Mr. Turner's Ben,  
Who heard the children spell,  
And picked the words right up by heart,  
And learned to read 'em well.

Well, the Northern folks kept sending  
The Yankee teachers down;  
And they stood right up and helped us,  
Though Rebs did sneer and frown.

And I longed to read my Bible,  
For precious words it said;  
But when I begun to learn it,  
Folks just shook their heads,

And said there is no use trying,

Oh! Chloe, you're too late;

But as I was rising sixty,

I had no time to wait.

So I got a pair of glasses,

And straight to work I went,

And never stopped till I could read

The hymns and Testament.

Then I got a little cabin

A place to call my own—

And I felt independent

As the queen upon her throne.

14. Meghan Rivard (Maine)

---

**[little tree]**  
**By E. E. Cummings**

little tree

little silent Christmas tree

you are so little

you are more like a flower

who found you in the green forest

and were you very sorry to come away?

see        i will comfort you

because you smell so sweetly

i will kiss your cool bark

and hug you safe and tight

just as your mother would,

only don't be afraid

look        the spangles

that sleep all the year in a dark box

dreaming of being taken out and allowed to shine,  
the balls the chains red and gold the fluffy threads,

put up your little arms

and i'll give them all to you to hold.

every finger shall have its ring

and there won't be a single place dark or unhappy

then when you're quite dressed

you'll stand in the window for everyone to see

and how they'll stare!

oh but you'll be very proud

and my little sister and i will take hands

and looking up at our beautiful tree

we'll dance and sing

"Noel Noel"

15. Isabella Romero (Maryland)

---

**The New Colossus**  
**By Emma Lazarus**

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;  
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.  
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she  
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

16. Emma Rose Frisbie (Connecticut)

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**The Empty Cup**  
**By Katharine Rolston Fisher**

Evening at Occoquan. Rain pelts the workhouse roof.

The prison matrons are sewing together for the Red Cross

The women prisoners are going to bed in two long rows.

Some of the suffrage pickets lie reading in the dim light.

Through the dark, above the rain, rings out a cry.

We listen at the windows. (Oh, those cries from punishment cells!)

A voice calls one of us by name.

“Miss Burns! Miss Burns! Will you see that I have a drink of water?”

Lucy Burns arises; slips on the coarse blue prison gown.

Over it her swinging hair, red-gold, throws a regal mantle.

She begs the night-watch to give the girl water.

One of the matrons leaves her war-bandages; we see her hasten to the cell.

The light in it goes out.

The voice despairing cries:

“She has taken away the cup and she will not bring me water.”

Rain pours on the roof. The suffragists lie awake.

The matrons work busily for the Red Cross.

17. Nia Cao (Massachusetts)

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**Chicago**  
**By Carl Sandburg**

Hog Butcher for the World,  
Tool maker, Stacker of Wheat,  
Player with Railroads and the Nation's  
Freight Handler;  
Stormy, husky, brawling,  
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your  
painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.  
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: yes, it is true I have seen the  
gunman kill and go free to kill again.  
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and  
children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.  
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city,  
and I give them back the sneer and say to them:  
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive  
and coarse and strong and cunning.

Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold  
slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;

Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted  
against the wilderness,

Bareheaded,

Shoveling,

Wrecking,

Planning,

Building, breaking, rebuilding,

Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,

Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,

Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,

Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs  
the heart of the people,

Laughing!

Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked,

sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player  
with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.