

1. Amelia Rylak (Virginia)

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**Renewal of Strength**  
**By Frances Ellen Watkins Harper**

The prison-house in which I live  
Is falling to decay,  
But God renews my spirit's strength  
Within these walls of clay.  
For me a dimness slowly creeps  
Around earth's fairest light,  
But heaven grows clearer to my view,  
And fairer to my sight.  
It may be earth's sweet harmonies  
Are duller to my ear,  
But music from my Father's house  
Begins to float more near.  
Then let the pillars of my home  
Crumble and fall away;  
Lo, God's dear love within my soul  
Renews it day by day.

2. Joy Ogunsakin (New Jersey)

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**The Modern Woman to Her Lover**  
**By Margaret Widdemer**

I shall not lie to you any more,

Flatter or fawn to attain my end—

I am what never has been before,

Woman—and Friend.

I shall be strong as a man is strong,

I shall be fair as a man is fair,

Hand in locked hand we shall pass along

To a purer air:

I shall not drag at your bridle-rein,

Knee pressed to knee shall we ride the hill;

I shall not lie to you ever again—

Will you love me still?

3. Gülse Polat (West Virginia)

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**Hibernal**  
**By Babette Deutsch**

The park is winter-plucked. The sky  
and the grey pavement show a sheeted face:  
the covered stare of one who had to die.  
Now, when men sweat,  
shoveling muddy snow or heaving ice,  
they know the helpless sweat that will not wet them twice,  
they know the staggering heart, the smothered breath  
that stand between this knowing and the end.  
Though they must drag a net of heavy hours  
about their straining limbs,  
though they behold  
love like a pillar of cloud, a pillar of fire—  
this net will break before they tire,  
this cloud, this flame will vanish and be cold.  
Men think of this who limp against the wind  
that freezes hate and sucks at their desire.  
Winter is on us now, and will return:  
soiled snows will choke the city streets again,

bleak twilights dull the windows as before,  
dark hurrying crowds push towards lit rooms in vain.  
One day we shall not kiss or quarrel any more.

#### 4. Xariel Banton (Pennsylvania)

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### On Children By Kahlil Gibran

And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, Speak to us of Children.

And he said:

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,

And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,

For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.

**Semifinal One  
Round Two**

Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;

For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

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

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**Why We Oppose Pockets for Women  
By Alice Duer Miller**

1. Because pockets are not a natural right.
2. Because the great majority of women do not want pockets. If they did they would  
have them.
3. Because whenever women have had pockets they have not used them.
4. Because women are required to carry enough things as it is, without the additional  
burden of pockets.
5. Because it would make dissension between husband and wife as to whose  
pockets were to be filled.
6. Because it would destroy man's chivalry toward woman, if he did not have to carry  
all her things in his pockets.
7. Because men are men, and women are women. We must not fly in the face of  
nature.

8. Because pockets have been used by men to carry tobacco, pipes, whiskey flasks, chewing gum and compromising letters. We see no reason to suppose that women would use them more wisely.

6. Summer Lin Brackett (New Hampshire)

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**Poetry**  
**By Marianne Moore**

I too, dislike it: there are things that are important beyond all this fiddle.

Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers that there is in

it after all, a place for the genuine.

Hands that can grasp, eyes

that can dilate, hair that can rise

if it must, these things are important not because a

high-sounding interpretation can be put upon them but because they are

useful; when they become so derivative as to become unintelligible, the

same thing may be said for all of us—that we

do not admire what

we cannot understand. The bat,

holding on upside down or in quest of something to

eat, elephants pushing, a wild horse taking a roll, a tireless wolf under

a tree, the immovable critic twinkling his skin like a horse that feels a flea, the  
base—

ball fan, the statistician—case after case

could be cited did

one wish it; nor is it valid

to discriminate against “business documents and  
school-books”; all these phenomena are important. One must make a distinction

however: when dragged into prominence by half poets, the result is not poetry,

nor till the autocrats among us can be

“literalists of

the imagination”—above

insolence and triviality and can present

for inspection, imaginary gardens with real toads in them, shall we have

it. In the meantime, if you demand on the one hand, in defiance of their opinion—

the raw material of poetry in

all its rawness, and

that which is on the other hand,

genuine, then you are interested in poetry.

7. Astrid Santos (Rhode Island)

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**Saturday's Child**  
**By Countee Cullen**

Some are teathed on a silver spoon,  
    With the stars strung for a rattle;  
I cut my teeth as the black raccoon—  
    For implements of battle.

Some are swaddled in silk and down,  
    And heralded by a star;  
They swathed my limbs in a sackcloth gown  
    On a night that was black as tar.

For some, godfather and goddame  
    The opulent fairies be;  
Dame Poverty gave me my name,  
    And Pain godfathered me.

For I was born on Saturday—  
    “Bad time for planting a seed,”  
Was all my father had to say,  
    And, “One mouth more to feed.”

Death cut the strings that gave me life,

And handed me to Sorrow,

The only kind of middle wife

My folks could beg or borrow.

8. Eason M. DeMarsico-Thorne (Vermont)

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**I Shall Return**  
**By Claude McKay**

I shall return again; I shall return  
To laugh and love and watch with wonder-eyes  
At golden noon the forest fires burn,  
Wafting their blue-black smoke to sapphire skies.  
I shall return to loiter by the streams  
That bathe the brown blades of the bending grasses,  
And realize once more my thousand dreams  
Of waters rushing down the mountain passes.  
I shall return to hear the fiddle and fife  
Of village dances, dear delicious tunes  
That stir the hidden depths of native life,  
Stray melodies of dim remembered runes.  
I shall return, I shall return again,  
To ease my mind of long, long years of pain.

9. Sarah Seidu (Ohio)

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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.

10. Caliyah McCall (North Carolina)

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**Memorial Wreath**  
**By Dudley Randall**

*(It is a little-known fact that 200,000 Negroes fought  
for freedom in the Union Army during the Civil War.)*

In this green month when resurrected flowers,  
Like laughing children ignorant of death,  
Brighten the couch of those who wake no more,  
Love and remembrance blossom in our hearts  
For you who bore the extreme sharp pang for us,  
And bought our freedom with your lives.

And now,

Honoring your memory, with love we bring  
These fiery roses, white-hot cotton flowers  
And violets bluer than cool northern skies  
You dreamed of stooped in burning prison fields  
When liberty was only a faint north star,  
Not a bright flower planted by your hands  
Reaching up hardy nourished with your blood.

Fit gravefellows you are for Douglass, Brown,  
Turner and Truth and Tubman . . . whose rapt eyes  
Fashioned a new world in this wilderness.

American earth is richer for your bones:  
Our hearts beat prouder for the blood we inherit.

**11. Oona Borovicka (South Carolina)**

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**Do You Know  
By Alice Duer Miller**

That in 1869 Miss Jex-Blake and four other women entered for a medical degree at the University of Edinburgh?

That the president of the College of Physicians refused to give the women the prizes they had won?

That the undergraduates insulted any professor who allowed women to compete for prizes?

That the women were stoned in the streets, and finally excluded from the medical school?

That in 1877 the British Medical Association declared women ineligible for membership?

That in 1881 the International Medical Congress excluded women from all but its "social and ceremonial meetings"?

That the Obstetrical Society refused to allow a woman's name to appear on the title page of a pamphlet which she had written with her husband?

That according to a recent dispatch from London, many hospitals, since the outbreak of hostilities, have asked women to become resident physicians, and public authorities are daily endeavoring to obtain women as assistant medical officers and as school doctors?

12. Natalia Gatti (Delaware)

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**Let No Charitable Hope  
By Elinor Wylie**

Now let no charitable hope  
Confuse my mind with images  
Of eagle and of antelope:  
I am by nature none of these.

I was, being human, born alone;  
I am, being woman, hard beset;  
I live by squeezing from a stone  
The little nourishment I get.

In masks outrageous and austere  
The years go by in single file;  
But none has merited my fear,  
And none has quite escaped my smile.

13. Nyla Dinkins (District of Columbia)

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**The Dilettante: A Modern Type**  
**By Paul Laurence Dunbar**

He scribbles some in prose and verse,

And now and then he prints it;

He paints a little, — gathers some

Of Nature's gold and mints it.

He plays a little, sings a song,

Acts tragic roles, or funny;

He does, because his love is strong,

But not, oh, not for money!

He studies almost everything

From social art to science;

A thirsty mind, a flowing spring,

Demand and swift compliance.

He looms above the sordid crowd—

At least through friendly lenses;

While his mamma looks pleased and proud,

And kindly pays expenses.

14. Meghan Rivard (Maine)

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To –  
By Sarah Helen Whitman

Vainly my heart had with thy sorceries striven:  
It had no refuge from thy love,—no Heaven  
But in thy fatal presence;—from afar  
It owned thy power and trembled like a star  
O'erfraught with light and splendor. Could I deem  
How dark a shadow should obscure its beam?—  
Could I believe that pain could ever dwell  
Where thy bright presence cast its blissful spell?  
Thou wert my proud palladium;—could I fear  
The avenging Destinies when thou wert near?—  
*Thou* wert my Destiny;—thy song, thy fame,  
The wild enchantments clustering round thy name,  
Were my soul's heritage, its royal dower;  
Its glory and its kingdom and its power!

15. Isabella Romero (Maryland)

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**Dawn**  
**By Ella Higginson**

The soft-toned clock upon the stair chimed three—  
    Too sweet for sleep, too early yet to rise.  
    In restful peace I lay with half-closed eyes,  
Watching the tender hours go dreamily;  
The tide was flowing in; I heard the sea  
    Shivering along the sands; while yet the skies  
    Were dim, uncertain, as the light that lies  
Beneath the fretwork of some wild-rose tree  
Within the thicket gray. The chanticleer  
    Sent drowsy calls across the slumbrous air;  
    In solemn silence sweet it was to hear  
My own heart beat . . . Then broad and deep and fair—  
    Trembling in its new birth from heaven's womb—  
    One crimson shaft of dawn sank thro' my room.

16. Emma Rose Frisbie (Connecticut)

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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.

17. Nia Cao (Massachusetts)

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**Yearnings For Home**  
**By Frances Ellen Watkins Harper**

Oh let me go I'm weary here  
And fevers scorch my brain,  
I long to feel my native air  
Breathe o'er each burning vein.

I long once more to see  
My home among the distant hills,  
To breathe amid the melody  
Of murmuring brooks and rills.

My home is where eternal snow  
Round threat'ning craters sleep,  
Where streamlets murmur soft and low  
And playful cascades leap.

Tis where glad scenes shall meet  
My weary, longing eye;  
Where rocks and Alpine forests greet

The bright cerulean sky.

Your scenes are bright I know,  
But there my mother pray'd,  
Her cot is lowly, but I go  
To die beneath its shade.

For, Oh I know she'll cling  
'Round me her treasur'd long,  
My sisters too will sing  
Each lov'd familiar song.

They'll soothe my fever'd brow,  
As in departed hours,  
And spread around my dying couch  
The brightest, fairest flowers.

Then let me go I'm weary here  
And fevers scorch my brain,  
I long to feel my native air,  
Breathe o'er each burning vein.