

**"A book is a dream you hold in your hands."**

**Neil Gaiman**

### Poems of the week

Three love poems written at very different times but all with something powerful to say.

Westron wynde, when wilt thou blow,  
The smalle raine downe can raine?  
Christ if my love were in my armes,  
And I in my bedde againe.

*Anonymous, early 1500s*



### A Red Red Rose

O my Luve is like a red, red rose  
That's newly sprung in June;  
O my Luve is like the melody  
That's sweetly played in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,  
So deep in luve am I;  
And I will luve thee still, my dear,  
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,  
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;  
I will love thee still, my dear,  
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!  
And fare thee weel awhile!  
And I will come again, my luve,  
Though it were ten thousand mile.  
*Robert Burns (1759 – 1796)*

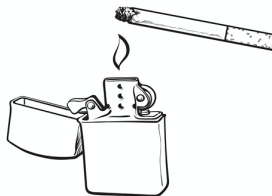


### Giving Up Smoking

There's not a Shakespeare sonnet  
Or a Beethoven quartet  
That's easier to like than you  
Or harder to forget.

You think that sounds extravagant?  
I haven't finished yet —  
I like you more than I would like  
To have a cigarette.

*Wendy Cope (b. 1945)*



### Fairness and Equality: what do they mean?

John and Margaret went shopping to buy Christmas presents for their three sons: Matthew 14, Mark 12 and Luke 10. The loving parents always tried to treat their children equally. This year they had budgeted to spend £100 on each of them.

For once it looked as if their shopping would be trouble-free, for they soon found what they were looking for: handheld PlayBoy games consoles at £100 each. Just as they were about to take three to the checkout, John noticed a special offer. If you bought two of the new, top of the range PlayBoyPlusMax consoles at £150 each, you would get an original PlayBoy free. They could spend the same amount of money and get superior goods.

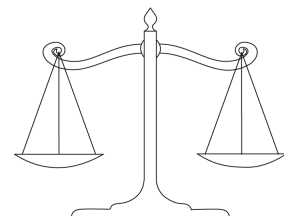
'We can't do that,' said Margaret. 'That would be unfair, since one of the boys would be getting less than the others.'

'But Margaret,' said John, excited at the thought of borrowing his sons' new toys, 'how can it be unfair? This way none of them gets a worse gift than he would have done, and two of them do better. But if we don't take the offer, two of the kids are worse off than they would otherwise be.'

'I want them all to be equal,' replied Margaret.

'Even if it means making them worse off?'

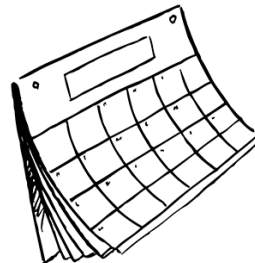
(Source, Julian Baggini, *The Pig that Wants to be Eaten and 99 Other Thought Experiments*)



## Words and music for all seasons?

Everyone's ticking off the time these days so here's a quiz with song and book titles that include the names of months or days of the week:

1. Freaky \_\_\_\_\_
2. Dark \_\_\_\_\_: The Full Account of the Battle of the Bulge
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Heartbreak
4. \_\_\_\_\_: The Story of the Russian Revolution
5. The Two Faces of \_\_\_\_\_
6. Drowned \_\_\_\_\_, The Keys to the Kingdom
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Morning, 3am
8. Light in \_\_\_\_\_
9. The Darling Buds of \_\_\_\_\_
10. I don't Like \_\_\_\_\_
11. The Hunt for Red \_\_\_\_\_
12. Ruby \_\_\_\_\_
13. The Man Who Was \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Night's Alright for Fighting
15. \_\_\_\_\_ Child



### Travelling Alone

Maybe it's different when you grow up around lightning. Say if you're from Kansas where all it is, is normal. Normal and dangerous, and you know exactly what it's like to catch the whipcrack end of the stuff with your roof or barn or the only tree around for miles. But that's not me. To me it's incredible. I mean, I look forward to it when it smells like lightning's coming. When it slashes and streaks and you can hear it sizzling apart the night. I totally love that. So guess what: I was on a plane one time – this was about three years ago – a little puddle jumper out of Dallas down to Lake Charles – so we must have been over East Texas or Shreveport – it could have been Arkansas – wherever – the point is, out the window was this giant cloud that looked like a lightning *factory*. You know, I mean, you should have seen it. It wasn't shooting out lightning bolts. They were all happening *inside* the cloud, so these areas would suddenly flash in the middle ... then somewhere else ... then *pmm pmm pmm pmm pmm* all in a row ... like if you were standing outside a welding shop in the dark, in the snow, and seeing all these blue-white flashes through windows covered in dust. Sort of like that. And it just went on and on and on not stopping. And I mean, it really did look like a factory. You know, like this was where and how lightning was made, then shipped around the world to thunderstorms. Like down there in the middle, gods were working with hammers and anvils and bellows and wearing those helmets with a little strip of glass to look out of. Like a cloudy furnace. Like the birthplace of light. Like maybe that's the way the universe looked in the womb. God, I wished someone would've been there with me. It was the kind of thing that's twice as good to share.

Rob Carney

### ANSWERS

- |                                    |                                 |                              |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Friday (Lil Dickey)             | 2. December (Robert E Merriam)  | 3. Tuesday (Stevie Wonder)   |
| 4. October (China Miéville)        | 5. January (Patricia Highsmith) | 6. Wednesday (Garth Nix)     |
| 7. Wednesday (Simon and Garfunkel) | 8. August (William Faulkner)    | 9. May (HE Bates)            |
| 10. Mondays (Boomtown Rats)        | 11. October (Tom Clancy)        | 12. Tuesday (Rolling Stones) |
| 13. Thursday (GK Chesterton)       | 14. Saturday (Elton John)       | 15. Thursday's (David Bowie) |

