

Ages 16-18: A Poem and Story Starter

Spring Street

Spring Street's lamps glow like a matchstick's sudden blaze,
Smokeless halos adrift in a dark-hungry haze,
Until Darkness splinters—dry, discarded mold—
And primrose-light crafts a warm, sepia fold.

Dawn kindles the clouds into lambswool-flames,
Roving dapples grazing the greys in tame games,
As light-drops rain to irrigate the dark,
And the wind's bleating hush depletes as rays lark.

Light hugs the candy-wrapper petals' frost-fears,
Grass and buds growing green, velveteen ears,
Pollen-mote light floats like piano notes,
Jazzy flights of brilliance to mellow the calm-coat.

Buds as bonny smiles slowly unfurl above,
Constructing a canopy of floral love;
Light rain arrives as the gentlest glove of May,
As first-light froth hues the blushed, expectant grey.

Puddles of sugar-steel reflect cotton-candy clouds,
Harp-chord rain fills the sky, parentally proud,
Mirrors of yesteryears' merry fun-fair dreams,
Dreams standing bold against all weather-schemes.

Raindrops puddle-dance in shimmering halos,
Pit-pattering with syncopated shadow-vibes,
Silver-steel shadows pulse like tidal rings,
Ere long gone as time flows on Water's wings.

Streetlamps and sky smudge only to clarify,
Melting the scene to reform with an angelic sigh,
A sigh as steely-blue as the warming sky,
A sky that speaks of infinite, love-high sanctuary.

Avian authors command the ambrosial air,
Wings sky-scribing with lyrical-looping flair,
A feisty bard full-inked in feathered light,
Ink of flame untamed, the soul's pure-love fight.

A revival of snowy survival draws near,
Redemption's slow roll without rival or fear,
It melts the icy cores of raw rage, now uncaged,
Thawing heart-clots from darkness-gobbled rays.

Bonny birdsong, Time's most divine dimes,
Spent freely by bird-seraphim, sublime,
Are notes of heart-flame, pure inferno-motes,
Long camouflaged in winter's cold-storm rotes.

Yet primrose pollen-motes of thornless care,
Seeds of holy love: root, grow, bloom, dare,
Eat the gloom and consume the cold,
Gnawing sharp bites into the Wind's woeful fold.

Bravery rebirthed, holdfast love from snow,
Blazing brighter even as ice threatens re-flow,
Honey-light kindling slumbering passions,
Harp-chord rain quenching dreams, no rations.

Blessed avenue oaks of silent bark,
Guardians of day, the twilight, and the dark,
Of legendary grace, keepers of heartwood rings,
Rings born of Sun's syrup, not bitter things.

They keep sweet souls safe from Winter's charms,
A treasure-trove of valley groves with arms,
Immune to the ice-beauty's siren call,
Anchoring doves to a love immortal.

Gnarled skin scars tell of the story-sage,
Titan-tales etched on each dawn-page,
Standing as the Season's unblinking face,
Sentinels woven of sturdy lambswool grace.

Deep roots blossom to warm the lost and forlorn,
Cosseting the soul war-torn, a salve to scorn,
Brown wands of magical care in the air,
Leaves casting light-shade spells of repair.

Smoking out scorn, erasing all wrath,
Laughing at the phantom storm's warpath,
Ferocity fades—a gaunt ghost of gossip—
As the foe bows to the breath of rose-hip.

Warm breezes bustle like kite-ribbon streams,
Warmer birdsong weaves lost kite-string dreams,
As each green flame-flute a symphony sows,
Vivid petal cellophane-velvet glows.

How Spring's light-puddle halos magnify
The childish soul and the innocent eye,
Folding dreams within warm wonder to grow,
Sprouting acorns to oak-marshmallow.

Story Starter: **Spring Street**

Spring Street had wallowed through the long, hollowed winter months. Woe resided in the feeble light; sadness clung to the architecture as if coyly camouflaged. It was a cold we felt in the marrow; one needs no eyes to witness the constant theft of heat. Every budding joy had been burgled bare. Yet spring eventually whispered to us as a hush-a-bye hymn, its lyrics etched into the dawn like a long-forgotten lullaby. Coal-dark clouds might dominate the zenith, growling in low, drumming rumbles, but the sun's flame-scores only etched deeper, glowed with stubborn, searing sparks. Each day the rain warmed in wispy increments—in barely perceptible shades of heat—yet enveloped with cool confidence. Happiness-hungry as we were, every note of warmth was amplified, for hope is a master that magnifies the merest merry mote. Waste is a luxury for those who haven't met Want. We dined greedily on this seasonal generosity while a waning winter remained blithely blind to spring's budding tendrils. Then, one by one, the sentinel trees that lined the avenue opened as portals and through them stepped...

Prompt questions:

1. How does the extended metaphor of 'avian authors' and 'sky-scribing' wings elevate the natural world into a conscious, narrative force?
2. To what extent do the 'angelic sighs' and 'seeds of holy love' suggest a theological framework for the seasonal transition?
3. How does the author manipulate tonal shifts to move the reader from a sense of 'burgled' joy to a state of 'sanctuary-belonging'?
4. In what ways does the text suggest that the 'inner landscape' of the narrator must be pruned or thawed to mirror the physical repair of the street?
5. Analyze the mathematical and numerical metaphors used to describe seasonal change; how does the contrast between 'something' and 'nothing' reflect the accumulation of small increments into a larger shift toward hope?