

Poems about Happiness

The Swing

by Robert Louis Stevenson

How do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
Ever a child can do!

Up in the air and over the wall,
Till I can see so wide,
River and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside--

Till I look down on the garden green,
Down on the roof so brown--
Up in the air I go flying again,
Up in the air and down!

Song of the Open Road

by Walt Whitman

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Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.

Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-fortune,
Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing,
Done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms,
Strong and content I travel the open road.

The earth, that is sufficient,
I do not want the constellations any nearer,
I know they are very well where they are,
I know they suffice for those who belong to them.

(Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,
I carry them, men and women, I carry them with me wherever I go,
I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,
I am fill'd with them, and I will fill them in return.)

The Trickle-Down Theory of Happiness

by Philip Appleman

Out of heaven, to bless the high places,
it falls on the penthouses, drizzling
at first, then a pelting allegro,
and Dick and Jane skip to the terrace
and go boogieing through the azaleas,
while mommy and daddy come running
with pots and pans, glasses, and basins
and try to hold all of it up there,
but no use, it's too much, it keeps coming,
and pours off the edges, down limestone
to the pitchers and pails on the ground, where
delirious residents catch it,
and bucket brigades get it moving
inside, until bathtubs are brimful,
but still it keeps coming, that shower
of silver in alleys and gutters,
all pouring downhill to the sleazy
red brick, and the barefoot people
who romp in it, laughing, but never
take thought for tomorrow, all spinning
in a pleasure they catch for a moment;
so when Providence turns off the spigot
and the sky goes as dry as a prairie,
then daddy looks down from the penthouse,
down to the streets, to the gutters,
and his heart goes out to his neighbors,
to the little folk thirsty for laughter,
and he prays in his boundless compassion:
on behalf of the world and its people
he demands of his God, *give me more.*

Fear of Happiness

by A.E. Stallings

A.E. Stallings

Looking back, it's something I've always had:

As a kid, it was a glass-floored elevator

I crouched at the bottom of, my eyes squinched tight,

Or staircase whose gaps I was afraid I'd slip through,

Though someone always said I'd be all right—

Just don't look down or See, it's not so bad

(The nothing rising underfoot). Then later

The high-dive at the pool, the tree-house perch,

Ferris wheels, balconies, cliffs, a penthouse view,

The merest thought of airplanes. You can call

It a fear of heights, a horror of the deep;

But it isn't the unfathomable fall

That makes me giddy, makes my stomach lurch,

It's that the ledge itself invents the leap.