

Four Poems by Robert Frost

Robert Frost

born March 26, 1874, San Francisco, Calif., U.S.

died Jan. 29, 1963, Boston, Mass.

U.S. poet.

Frost's family moved to New England early in his life. After stints at Dartmouth College and Harvard University and a difficult period as a teacher and farmer, he moved to England and published his first collections, *A Boy's Will* (1913) and *North of Boston* (1914). At the outbreak of war he returned to New England. He closely observed rural life and in his poetry endowed it with universal, even metaphysical, meaning, using colloquial language, familiar rhythms, and common symbols to express both its pastoral ideals and its dark complexities.



In a Disused Graveyard

by Robert Frost - 1923

The living come with grassy tread
To read the gravestones on the hill;
The graveyard draws the living still,
But never any more the dead.

The verses in it say and say:
"The ones who living come today
To read the stones and go away
Tomorrow dead will come to stay."

So sure of death the marbles rhyme,
Yet can't help marking all the time
How no one dead will seem to come.
What is it men are shrinking from?

It would be easy to be clever
And tell the stones: Men hate to die
And have stopped dying now forever.
I think they would believe the lie.

Acquainted with the Night

by Robert Frost

I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain -- and back in rain.
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet
When far away an interrupted cry
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-bye;
And further still at an unearthly height,
O luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.
I have been one acquainted with the night.

Now Close the Windows

by Robert Frost - 1913

Now close the windows and hush all the fields;
If the trees must, let them silently toss;
No bird is singing now, and if there is,
Be it my loss.

It will be long ere the marshes resume,
It will be long ere the earliest bird:
So close the windows and not hear the wind,
But see all wind-stirred.

My November Guest

by Robert Frost - 1913

My Sorrow, when she's here with me,
Thinks these dark days of autumn rain
Are beautiful as days can be;
She loves the bare, the withered tree;
She walks the sodden pasture lane.

Her pleasure will not let me stay.
She talks and I am fain to list:
She's glad the birds are gone away,
She's glad her simple worsted grey
Is silver now with clinging mist.

The desolate, deserted trees,
The faded earth, the heavy sky,
The beauties she so truly sees,
She thinks I have no eye for these,
And vexes me for reason why.

Not yesterday I learned to know
The love of bare November days
Before the coming of the snow,
But it were vain to tell her so,
And they are better for her praise