**The Blossom**

    Little think’st thou, poor flower,

    Whom I have watched six or seven days,

And seen thy birth, and seen what every hour

Gave to thy growth, thee to this height to raise,

And now dost laugh and triumph on this bough,

              Little think’st thou,

That it will freeze anon, and that I shall

To-morrow find thee fall’n, or not at all.

    Little think’st thou, poor heart,

    That labour’st yet to nestle thee,

And think’st by hovering here to get a part

In a forbidden or forbidding tree,

And hop’st her stiffness by long siege to bow,

              Little think’st thou

That thou tomorrow, ere the sun doth wake,

Must with the sun and me a journey take.

    But thou, which lov’st to be

    Subtle to plague thyself, wilt say,

Alas! if you must go, what's that to me?

Here lies my business, and here I will stay:

You go to friends, whose love and means present

              Various content

To your eyes, ears, and taste, and every part.

If then your body go, what need you a heart?

    Well then, stay here; but know,

    When thou hast stayed and done thy most,

A naked thinking heart, that makes no show,

Is to a woman, but a kind of ghost;

How shall she know my heart; or having none,

              Know thee for one?

Practice may make her know some other part;

But take my word, she doth not know a heart.

    Meet me in London, then,

    Twenty days hence, and thou shalt see

Me fresher and more fat, by being with men,

Than if I had stayed still with her and thee.

For God's sake, if you can, be you so too;

              I would give you

There, to another friend, whom we shall find

As glad to have my body, as my mind.

- John Donne

**Bavarian Gentians**

Not every man has gentians in his house

in soft September, at slow, sad Michaelmas.

Bavarian gentians, big and dark, only dark

darkening the day-time, torch-like with the smoking blueness of Pluto’s gloom,

ribbed and torch-like, with their blaze of darkness spread blue

down flattening into points, flattened under the sweep of white day

torch-flower of the blue-smoking darkness, Pluto’s dark-blue daze,

black lamps from the halls of Dis, burning dark blue,

giving off darkness, blue darkness, as Demeter’s pale lamps give off light,

lead me then, lead me the way.

Reach me a gentian, give me a torch!

let me guide myself with the blue, forked torch of this flower

down the darker and darker stairs, where blue is darkened on blueness

even where Persephone goes, just now, from the frosted September

to the sightless realm where darkness is awake upon the dark

and Persephone herself is but a voice

or a darkness invisible enfolded in the deeper dark

of the arms Plutonic, and pierced with the passion of dense gloom,

among the splendor of torches of darkness, shedding darkness on the lost bride and her groom.

- D. H. Lawrence

**The Poems of Our Climate**

I

Clear water in a brilliant bowl,

Pink and white carnations. The light

In the room more like a snowy air,

Reflecting snow. A newly-fallen snow

At the end of winter when afternoons return.

Pink and white carnations – one desires

So much more than that. The day itself

Is simplified: a bowl of white,

Cold, a cold porcelain, low and round,

With nothing more than the carnations there.

II

Say even that this complete simplicity

Stripped one of all one’s torments, concealed

The evilly compounded, vital I

And made it fresh in a world of white,

A world of clear water, brilliant-edged,

Still one would want more, one would need more,

More than a world of white and snowy scents.

III

There would still remain the never-resting mind,

So that one would want to escape, come back

To what had been so long composed.

The imperfect is our paradise.

Note that, in this bitterness, delight,

Since the imperfect is so hot in us,

Lies in flawed words and stubborn sounds.

- Wallace Stevens

**The Wild Iris**

At the end of my suffering

there was a door.

Hear me out: that which you call death

I remember.

Overhead, noises, branches of the pine shifting.

Then nothing. The weak sun

flickered over the dry surface.

It is terrible to survive

as consciousness

buried in the dark earth.

Then it was over: that which you fear, being

a soul and unable

to speak, ending abruptly, the stiff earth

bending a little. And what I took to be

birds darting in low shrubs.

You who do not remember

passage from the other world

I tell you I could speak again: whatever

returns from oblivion returns

to find a voice:

from the center of my life came

a great fountain, deep blue

shadows on azure seawater.

- Louise Glück

**A Vase of Flowers**

The vase is white and would be a cylinder

If a cylinder were wider at the top than at the bottom.

The flowers are red, white and blue.

All contact with the flowers is forbidden.

The white flowers strain upward

Into a pallid air of their references,

Pushed slightly by the red and blue flowers.

If you were going to be jealous of the flowers,

Please forget it.

They mean absolutely nothing to me.

- John Ashbery