**[Sonnet on the Sonnet]**

A Sonnet is a moment’s monument,—

 Memorial from the Soul’s eternity

 To one dead deathless hour. Look that it be,

Whether for lustral rite or dire portent,

Of its own intricate fulness reverent:

 Carve it in ivory or in ebony,

 As Day or Night may rule; and let Time see

Its flowering crest impearled and orient.

A Sonnet is a coin: its face reveals

 The soul,—its converse, to what Power ’tis due:—

Whether for tribute to the august appeals

Of Life, or dower in Love’s high retinue

It serve; or, ’mid the dark wharf’s cavernous breath,

In Charon’s palm it pay the toll to Death.

 —D. G. Rossetti

**Moment Fugue**

The syphillitic selling violets calmly

      and daisies

By the subway news-stand knows

       how hyacinths

This April morning offers

      hurriedly

In bunches sorted freshly—

     and bestows

On every purchaser

      (of heaven perhaps)

His eyes—

      like crutches hurtled against glass

Fall mute and sudden (dealing change

      for lilies)

Beyond the roses that no flesh can pass.

 —Hart Crane

**Of Bright & Blue Birds & The Gala Sun**

Some things, niño, some things are like this,

That instantly and in themselves are gay

And you and I are such things, O most miserable . . .

For a moment they are gay and are a part

Of an element, the exactest element for us,

In which we pronounce joy like a word of our own.

It is there, being imperfect, and with these things

And erudite in happiness, with nothing learned,

That we are joyously ourselves and we think

Without the labor of thought, in that element,

And we feel, in a way apart, for a moment, as if

There was a bright *scienza* outside of ourselves,

A gaiety that is being, not merely knowing,

The will to be and to be total in belief,

Provoking a laughter, an agreement, by surprise.

 —Wallace Stevens

 **The Oven Bird**

There is a singer everyone has heard,

Loud, a mid-summer and a mid-wood bird,

Who makes the solid tree trunks sound again.

He says that leaves are old and that for flowers

Mid-summer is to spring as one to ten.

He says the early petal-fall is past

When pear and cherry bloom went down in showers

On sunny days a moment overcast;

And comes that other fall we name the fall.

He says the highway dust is over all.

The bird would cease and be as other birds

But that he knows in singing not to sing.

The question that he frames in all but words

Is what to make of a diminished thing.

 —Robert Frost

 **Momentary**

I never glimpse her but she goes

Who had been basking in the sun,

Her links of chain mail one by one

Aglint with pewter, bronze and rose.

I never see her lying coiled

Atop the garden step, or under

A dark leaf, unless I blunder

And by some motion she is foiled.

Too late I notice as she passes

Zither of chromatic scale—

I only ever see her tail

Quicksilver into tall grasses.

I know her only by her flowing,

By her glamour disappearing

Into shadow as I’m nearing—

I only recognize her going.

 —A. E. Stallings