**‘Methought I Saw my Late Espoused Saint’**

Methought I saw my late espoused saint

Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,

Whom Jove’s great son to her glad husband gave,

Rescued from death by force though pale and faint.

Mine as whom washed from spot of childbed taint,

Purification in the old Law did save,

And such, as yet once more I trust to have

Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,

Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:

Her face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight,

Love, sweetness, goodness in her person shined

So clear, as in no face with more delight.

But O, as to embrace me she inclined

I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

– John Milton

**The Unseen Playmate**

When children are playing alone on the green,

In comes the playmate that never was seen.

When children are happy and lonely and good,

The Friend of the Children comes out of the wood.

Nobody heard him, and nobody saw,

His is a picture you never could draw,

But he’s sure to be present, abroad or at home,

When children are happy and playing alone.

He lies in the laurels, he runs on the grass,

He sings when you tinkle the musical glass;

Whene’er you are happy and cannot tell why,

The Friend of the Children is sure to be by!

He loves to be little, he hates to be big,

’Tis he that inhabits the caves that you dig;

’Tis he when you play with your soldiers of tin

That sides with the Frenchmen and never can win.

’Tis he, when at night you go off to your bed,

Bids you go to your sleep and not trouble your head;

For wherever they’re lying, in cupboard or shelf,

’Tis he will take care of your playthings himself!

* Robert Louis Stevenson

(from *A Child’s Garden of Verses*)

**The Self-Unseeing**

Here is the ancient floor,

Footworn and hollowed and thin,

Here was the former door

Where the dead feet walked in.

She sat here in her chair,

Smiling into the fire;

He who played stood there,

Bowing it higher and higher.

Childlike, I danced in a dream;

Blessings emblazoned that day;

Everything glowed with a gleam;

Yet we were looking away!

– Thomas Hardy

**Missing the Sea**

Something removed roars in the ears of this house,

Hangs its drapes windless, stuns mirrors

Till reflections lack substance.

Some sound like the gnashing of windmills ground

To a dead halt;

A deafening absence, a blow.

It hoops this valley, weighs this mountain,

Estranges gesture, pushes this pencil

Through a thick nothing now,

Freights cupboards with silence, folds sour laundry

Like the clothes of the dead left exactly

As the dead behaved by the beloved,

Incredulous, expecting occupancy.

– Derek Walcott

**Song of the Unseen Bird**

To walk so long with her in so much quiet

Then hear that unseen bird, whose name

I don’t know, wouldn’t know where to find,

Singing somewhere among the leaf sheen,

Was to realize why, when his beloved hero-killer

Resolves at last to die, Homer gives us

Not the laments the sea nymphs wail

But the nonsense song of their limpid names

He makes up: Limnoreia and Doto and Proto

And sometimes there are no words

And Kallianassa and Kymodoke and Maera

And sometimes no words could be sad enough.

Ashwing, Seedquit, Spotted Larmer:

*Tee-way tee-wee tee-wooo* you sang to us.

– H. L. Spelman