**The Aim Was Song**

BY [ROBERT FROST](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/robert-frost)

Before man came to blow it right

     The wind once blew itself untaught,

And did its loudest day and night

     In any rough place where it caught.

Man came to tell it what was wrong:

     It hadn’t found the place to blow;

It blew too hard—the aim was song.

     And listen—how it ought to go!

He took a little in his mouth,

     And held it long enough for north

To be converted into south,

     And then by measure blew it forth.

By measure. It was word and note,

     The wind the wind had meant to be—

A little through the lips and throat.

     The aim was song—the wind could see.

**To One Coming North**

BY [CLAUDE MCKAY](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/claude-mckay)

At first you'll joy to see the playful snow,

  Like white moths trembling on the tropic air,

Or waters of the hills that softly flow

  Gracefully falling down a shining stair.

And when the fields and streets are covered white

  And the wind-worried void is chilly, raw,

Or underneath a spell of heat and light

  The cheerless frozen spots begin to thaw,

Like me you'll long for home, where birds' glad song

  Means flowering lanes and leas and spaces dry,

And tender thoughts and feelings fine and strong,

  Beneath a vivid silver-flecked blue sky.

But oh! more than the changeless southern isles,

  When Spring has shed upon the earth her charm,

You'll love the Northland wreathed in golden smiles

  By the miraculous sun turned glad and warm.

Introduction to Poetry

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem’s room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to waterski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author’s name on the shore.

But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.

[Billy Collins](http://www.poemhunter.com/billy-collins/poems/)

The Arrow and the Song

I shot an arrow into the air,

It fell to earth, I knew not where;

For, so swiftly it flew, the sight

Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,

It fell to earth, I knew not where;

For who has sight so keen and strong That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak

I found the arrow, still unbroke;

And the song, from beginning to end,

I found again in the heart of a friend.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.