

1. Shillin' a Day

By Joseph Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

My name is O'Kelly, I've heard the Revelly
From Birr to Bareilly, from Leeds to Lahore,
Hong-Kong and Peshawur,
Lucknow and Etawah,
And fifty-five more all endin' in "pore".
Black Death and his quickness, the depth and the thickness,
Of sorrow and sickness I've known on my way,
But I'm old and I'm nervis,
I'm cast from the Service,
And all I deserve is a shillin' a day.

(Chorus) Shillin' a day,
 Bloomin' good pay --
 Lucky to touch it, a shillin' a day!

Oh, it drives me half crazy to think of the days I
Went slap for the Ghazi, my sword at my side,
When we rode Hell-for-leather
Both squadrons together,
That didn't care whether we lived or we died.
But it's no use despairin', my wife must go charin'
An' me commissairin' the pay-bills to better,
So if me you be'old
In the wet and the cold,
By the Grand Metropold, won't you give me a letter?
(Full chorus) Give 'im a letter --
 'Can't do no better,
 Late Troop-Sergeant-Major an' -- runs with a letter!
 Think what 'e's been,
 Think what 'e's seen,
 Think of his pension an' ----

Gawd save the Queen

2. Old Woman

By Carl Sandburg (1878-1967)

THE owl-car clatters along, dogged by the echo
From building and battered paving-stone.
The headlight scoffs at the mist,
And fixes its yellow rays in the cold slow rain;
Against a pane I press my forehead
And drowsily look on the walls and sidewalks.

The headlight finds the way
And life is gone from the wet and the welter--
Only an old woman, bloated, disheveled and bleared.

Far-wandered waif of other days,
Huddles for sleep in a doorway,
Homeless.

3. The Right to Grief **By Carl Sandburg**

To Certain Poets About to Die

TAKE your fill of intimate remorse, perfumed sorrow,
Over the dead child of a millionaire,
And the pity of Death refusing any check on the bank
Which the millionaire might order his secretary to
scratch off
And get cashed.

Very well,
You for your grief and I for mine.
Let me have a sorrow my own if I want to.

I shall cry over the dead child of a stockyards hunky.
His job is sweeping blood off the floor.
He gets a dollar seventy cents a day when he works
And it's many tubs of blood he shoves out with a broom
day by day.

Now his three year old daughter
Is in a white coffin that cost him a week's wages.
Every Saturday night he will pay the undertaker fifty
cents till the debt is wiped out.

The hunky and his wife and the kids
Cry over the pinched face almost at peace in the white box.

They remember it was scrawny and ran up high doctor bills.
They are glad it is gone for the rest of the family now
will have more to eat and wear.

Yet before the majesty of Death they cry around the coffin
And wipe their eyes with red bandanas and sob when
the priest says, "God have mercy on us all."

I have a right to feel my throat choke about this.
You take your grief and I mine--see?
To-morrow there is no funeral and the hunky goes back
to his job sweeping blood off the floor at a dollar
seventy cents a day.
All he does all day long is keep on shoving hog blood
ahead of him with a broom.

4. Advertisement For The Waldorf-Astoria By Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Fine living . . . a la carte?
Come to the Waldorf-Astoria!

LISTEN HUNGRY ONES!
Look! See what Vanity Fair says about the
new Waldorf-Astoria:

"All the luxuries of private home. . . ."
Now, won't that be charming when the last flop-house
has turned you down this winter?

Furthermore:

"It is far beyond anything hitherto attempted in the hotel
world. . . ." It cost twenty-eight million dollars. The fa-
mous Oscar Tschirky is in charge of banqueting.

Alexandre Gastaud is chef. It will be a distinguished
background for society.

So when you've no place else to go, homeless and hungry
ones, choose the Waldorf as a background for your rags--
(Or do you still consider the subway after midnight good
enough?)

ROOMERS

Take a room at the new Waldorf, you down-and-outers--
sleepers in charity's flop-houses where God pulls a
long face, and you have to pray to get a bed.

They serve swell board at the Waldorf-Astoria. Look at the menu, will
you:

GUMBO CREOLE
CRABMEAT IN CASSOLETTE
BOILED BRISKET OF BEEF
SMALL ONIONS IN CREAM
WATERCRESS SALAD
PEACH MELBA

Have luncheon there this afternoon, all you jobless.

Why not?

Dine with some of the men and women who got rich off of
your labor, who clip coupons with clean white fingers
because your hands dug coal, drilled stone, sewed gar-
ments, poured steel to let other people draw dividends
and live easy.

(Or haven't you had enough yet of the soup-lines and the bit-
ter bread of charity?)

Walk through Peacock Alley tonight before dinner, and get

warm, anyway. You've got nothing else to do.

5. Night Funeral in Harlem **By Langston Hughes**

Night funeral
In Harlem:

Where did they get
Them two fine cars?

Insurance man, he did not pay--
His insurance lapsed the other day--
Yet they got a satin box
for his head to lay.

Night funeral
In Harlem:

Who was it sent
That wreath of flowers?

Them flowers came
from that poor boy's friends--
They'll want flowers, too,
When they meet their ends.

Night funeral
in Harlem:

Who preached that
Black boy to his grave?

Old preacher man
Preached that boy away--
Charged Five Dollars
His girl friend had to pay.

Night funeral
In Harlem:

When it was all over
And the lid shut on his head
and the organ had done played
and the last prayers been said
and six pallbearers
Carried him out for dead
And off down Lenox Avenue
That long black hearse done sped,

The street light
At his corner
Shined just like a tear--
That boy that they was mournin'
Was so dear, so dear
To them folks that brought the flowers,
To that girl who paid the preacher man--
It was all their tears that made
That poor boy's
Funeral grand.

Night funeral
In Harlem.

6. The Chimney Sweeper
By William Blake (1757-1827)

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue,
Could scarcely cry 'weep 'weep 'weep 'weep,
So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head
That curled like a lamb's back was shav'd, so I said.
Hush Tom never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair

And so he was quiet. & that very night.
As Tom was a sleeping he had such a sight
That thousands of sweepers Dick, Joe, Ned, & Jack
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black,

And by came an Angel who had a bright key
And he open'd the coffins & set them all free.
Then down a green plain leaping laughing they run
And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind.
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke and we rose in the dark
And got with our bags & our brushes to work.
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.