

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF  
**POETRY**

SIXTH EDITION

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## Waving Adieu, Adieu, Adieu\*

That would be waving and that would be crying,  
 Crying and shouting and meaning farewell,  
 Farewell in the eyes and farewell at the centre,  
 Just to stand still without moving a hand.

5 In a world without heaven to follow, the stops  
 Would be endings, more poignant than partings, profounder,  
 And that would be saying farewell, repeating farewell,  
 Just to be there and just to behold.

10 To be one's singular self, to despise  
 The being that yielded so little, acquired  
 So little, too little to care, to turn  
 To the ever-jubilant weather, to sip

15 One's cup and never to say a word,  
 Or to sleep or just to lie there still,  
 Just to be there, just to be beheld,  
 That would be bidding farewell, be bidding farewell.

20 One likes to practice the thing. They practice,  
 Enough, for heaven. Ever-jubilant,  
 What is there here but weather, what spirit  
 Have I except it comes from the sun?

1936

## 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  
 5 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,  
 10 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

\*DIALOGUE NOTE For the relationship between this poem and Mark Strand's *Dark Harbor XVI* (p. 1939), see Dialogue Note 11 on the Student Site.

And made it fresh in a world of white,  
 15 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  
 20 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.

1942

## The House Was Quiet and the World Was Calm

The house was quiet and the world was calm.  
 The reader became the book; and summer night  
 Was like the conscious being of the book.  
 The house was quiet and the world was calm.  
 5 The words were spoken as if there was no book,  
 Except that the reader leaned above the page,  
 Wanted to lean, wanted much most to be  
 The scholar to whom his book is true, to whom  
 The summer night is like a perfection of thought.  
 10 The house was quiet because it had to be.  
 The quiet was part of the meaning, part of the mind:  
 The access of perfection to the page.  
 And the world was calm. The truth in a calm world,  
 In which there is no other meaning, itself  
 15 Is calm, itself is summer and night, itself  
 Is the reader leaning late and reading there.

1947

## From An Ordinary Evening in New Haven

## XXX

The last leaf that is going to fall has fallen.  
 The robins are là-bas,<sup>o</sup> the squirrels, in tree-caves,  
 Huddle together in the knowledge of squirrels.

*over there*