

# WALT WHITMAN

## *Miracles*

*Why, who makes much of a miracle?  
As to me I know of nothing else but miracles,  
Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,  
Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,  
Or wade with naked feet along the beach just in the edge of the water,  
Or stand under trees in the woods,  
Or talk by day with any one I love, or sleep in the bed at night with any one I love,  
Or sit at table at dinner with the rest,  
Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,  
Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive of a summer forenoon,  
Or animals feeding in the fields,  
Or birds, or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,  
Or the wonderfulness of the sundown, or of stars shining so quiet and bright,  
Or the exquisite delicate thin curve of the new moon in spring;  
These with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles,  
The whole referring, yet each distinct and in its place.  
To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,  
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,  
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,  
Every foot of the interior swarms with the same.  
To me the sea is a continual miracle,  
The fishes that swim—the rocks—the motion of the waves—the  
ships with men in them,  
What stranger miracles are there?*

# WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

## *The Secret Rose*

*FAR-OFF, most secret, and inviolate Rose,  
Enfold me in my hour of hours; where those  
Who sought thee in the Holy Sepulchre,  
Or in the wine-vat, dwell beyond the stir  
And tumult of defeated dreams; and deep  
Among pale eyelids, heavy with the sleep  
Men have named beauty. Thy great leaves enfold  
The ancient beards, the helms of ruby and gold  
Of the crowned Magi; and the king whose eyes  
Saw the pierced Hands and Rood of elder rise  
In Druid vapour and make the torches dim;  
Till vain frenzy awoke and he died; and him  
Who met Fand walking among flaming dew  
By a grey shore where the wind never blew,  
And lost the world and Emer for a kiss;  
And him who drove the gods out of their liss,  
And till a hundred moms had flowered red  
Feasted, and wept the barrows of his dead;*

# WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

## *The Secret Rose*

*And the proud dreaming king who flung the crown  
And sorrow away, and calling bard and clown  
Dwelt among wine-stained wanderers in deep woods:  
And him who sold tillage, and house, and goods,  
And sought through lands and islands numberless  
years,  
Until he found, with laughter and with tears,  
A woman of so shining loveliness  
That men threshed corn at midnight by a tress,  
A little stolen tress. I, too, await  
The hour of thy great wind of love and hate.  
When shall the stars be blown about the sky,  
Like the sparks blown out of a smithy, and die?  
Surely thine hour has come, thy great wind blows,  
Far-off, most secret, and inviolate Rose?*

MARY OLIVER

## *Such silence*

*As deep as I ever went into the forest  
I came upon an old stone bench, very, very old,  
and around it a clearing, and beyond that  
trees taller and older than I had ever seen.*

*Such silence!*

*It really wasn't so far from a town, but it seemed  
all the clocks in the world had stopped counting.  
So it was hard to suppose the usual rules applied.  
Sometimes there's only a hint, a possibility.  
What's magical, sometimes, has deeper roots  
than reason.*

*I hope everyone knows that.*

*I sat on the bench, waiting for something.*

*An angel, perhaps.*

*Or dancers with the legs of goats.*

*No, I didn't see either. But only, I think, because  
I didn't stay long enough.*

# ANNE SEXTON

## *Her Kind*

*I have gone out, a possessed witch,  
haunting the black air, braver at night;  
dreaming evil, I have done my hitch  
over the plain houses, light by light:  
lonely thing, twelve-fingered, out of mind.  
A woman like that is not a woman, quite.*

*I have been her kind.*

*I have found the warm caves in the woods,  
filled them with skillets, carvings, shelves,  
closets, silks, innumerable goods;  
fixed the suppers for the worms and the elves:  
whining, rearranging the disaligned.  
A woman like that is misunderstood.*

*I have been her kind.*

*I have ridden in your cart, driver,  
waved my nude arms at villages going by,  
learning the last bright routes, survivor  
where your flames still bite my thigh  
and my ribs crack where your wheels wind.  
A woman like that is not ashamed to die.*

*I have been her kind.*