**We Real Cool**

By Gwendolyn Brooks

*The Pool Players.*

*Seven at the Golden Shovel.*

            We real cool. We

            Left school. We

            Lurk late. We

            Strike straight. We

            Sing sin. We

            Thin gin. We

            Jazz June. We

            Die soon.

Gwendolyn Brooks, “We Real Cool” from *Selected Poems.* Copyright © 1963 by Gwendolyn Brooks.

**I, Too**

By [Langston Hughes](http://www.poetryoutloud.org/poet/langston-hughes)

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I’ll be at the table

When company comes.

Nobody’ll dare

Say to me,

“Eat in the kitchen,”

Then.

Besides,

They’ll see how beautiful I am

And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

Langston Hughes, “I, Too” from *Collected Poems.* Copyright © 1994 by The Estate of Langston Hughes.

**Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night**

By Dylan Thomas

Do not go gentle into that good night,

Old age should burn and rave at close of day;

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,

Because their words had forked no lightning they

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright

Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,

And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight

Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,

Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.

Do not go gentle into that good night.

Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Dylan Thomas, “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” from *The Poems of Dylan Thomas*. Copyright 1939, 1946 by New Directions Publishing Corporation.

**Mother to Son**

By Langston Hughes

Well, son, I’ll tell you:

Life for me ain’t been no crystal stair.

It’s had tacks in it,

And splinters,

And boards torn up,

And places with no carpet on the floor—

Bare.

But all the time

I’se been a-climbin’ on,

And reachin’ landin’s,

And turnin’ corners,

And sometimes goin’ in the dark

Where there ain’t been no light.

So boy, don’t you turn back.

Don’t you set down on the steps

’Cause you finds it’s kinder hard.

Don’t you fall now—

For I’se still goin’, honey,

I’se still climbin’,

And life for me ain’t been no crystal stair.

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