



CLEAN Environmental Education
Virtual Creative Writing Workshop

with Tina Mozelle Braziel

Greater Romantic Lyric Examples

These poems are first printed with the sections where the "turn" from present tense to past tense occurs indicated in green.

To Shake Another

By Tina Mozelle Braziel

When heat visibly wavers over our truck hood,
we feel like puddles, our skin as thin as a frog's.

From the broom sedge, the rattle of katydids ripples
through us. I first felt sound in grade school

when a struck tuning fork touched another.
Its quaver shook the other fork into its own humming.

Evenings then, when pines shivered
with the chirr of peepers,

I wondered how frogs carry
quivering metal inside their tenderness.

Today pressing my cheek to our house frame,
I hammer, listening to how all the driven nails resound.

Each strike deepens the note ringing out
from here to beyond the ridge.

In it, I feel the reverberation
of hammer, anvil, and stirrup

of when he first called my name setting
what is tender and mettle in me abuzz.

Digging

By Seamus Heaney, from *Death of a Naturalist*.

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Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked,
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade.
Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods
Over his shoulder, going down and down
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it.



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Movable Objects

By Tina Mozelle Braziel

Tonight, luminescent algae lights the shore.
The water gleams like a starry sky.
Its glints swirl away before I can touch them.

Nights long ago I stretched out on the sand
and watched meteors cross the sky, wanting to rearrange

the low-slung stars, those immovable objects,
into a gondola gliding beneath an arched bridge
and a peacock spreading his iridescent fan.

I'd wanted to rid the sky (map of my days)
of arrows, bullish horns, scorpion stings.

This morning, the water rocked me
as if I were its only baby. But the sky surfed
with clouds did not mirror me in its blue.

Who wants that sky or these lights stirring
in dark waters as if every movement is an irresistible force?

Give me this sand that wind sways into dunes,
give me the shore lifting
around the shape of my footsteps.

Let the surf smooth it into a flat mirror
reflecting the blue light of the moon.