**Nothing Gold Can Stay**

**By Robert Frost**

Nature’s first green is gold,

Her hardest hue to hold,

Her early leaf’s a flower;

But only so an hour.

Then leaf subsides to leaf.

So Eden sank to grief,

So dawn goes down to day.

Nothing gold can stay.**Caged Bird**

***BY MAYA ANGELOU***

A free bird leaps

on the back of the wind

and floats downstream

till the current ends

and dips his wing

in the orange sun rays

and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks

down his narrow cage

can seldom see through

his bars of rage

his wings are clipped and

his feet are tied

so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings

with a fearful trill

of things unknown

but longed for still

and his tune is heard

on the distant hill

for the caged bird

sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze

and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees

and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn

and he names the sky his own

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams

his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream

his wings are clipped and his feet are tied

so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings

with a fearful trill

of things unknown

but longed for still

and his tune is heard

on the distant hill

for the caged bird

sings of freedom.

**Almost Perfect**

**by Shel Silverstein**

"Almost perfect... but not quite."

Those were the words of Mary Hume

At her seventh birthday party,

Looking 'round the ribboned room.

"This tablecloth is pink not white--

Almost perfect... but not quite."

"Almost perfect... but not quite."

Those were the words of grown-up Mary

Talking about her handsome beau,

The one she wasn't gonna marry.

"Squeezes me a bit too tight--

Almost perfect... but not quite."

"Almost perfect... but not quite."

Those were the words of ol' Miss Hume

Teaching in the seventh grade,

Grading papers in the gloom

Late at night up in her room.

"They never cross their t's just right--

Almost perfect... but not quite."

Ninety-eight the day she died

Complainin' 'bout the spotless floor.

People shook their heads and sighed,

"Guess that she'll like heaven more."

Up went her soul on feathered wings,

Out the door, up out of sight.

Another voice from heaven came--

"Almost perfect... but not quite."

**There is No Word for Goodbye**

**By Mary Tallmountain**

Sokoya, I said, looking through

the net of wrinkles into

wise black pools

of her eyes.

What do you say in Athabaskan

when you leave each other?

What is the word

for goodbye?

A shade of feeling rippled

the wind-tanned skin.

Ah, nothing, she said,

watching the river flash.

She looked at me close.

We just say, Tlaa.

That means,

See you.

We never leave each other.

When does your mouth

say goodbye to your heart?

She touched me light

as a bluebell.

You forget when you leave us,

You’re so small then.

We don’t use that word.

We always think you’re coming back,

but if you don’t,

we’ll see you some place else,

You understand,

There is no word for goodbye.