



**A HAPPY
POEM
TO START
EVERY DAY**

**EDITED BY JANE
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JANUARY

The Radiance of Dawn

1 JANUARY

New Year

As the old year sinks down in Time's ocean,
Stand ready to launch with the new,
And waste no regrets, no emotion,
As the masts and the spars pass from view.
Weep not if some treasures go under,
And sink in the rotten ship's hold,
That blithe bonny barque sailing yonder
May bring you more wealth than the old.

For the world is for ever improving,
All the past is not worth one to-day,
And whatever deserves our true loving,
Is stronger than death or decay.
Old love, was it wasted devotion?
Old friends, were they weak or untrue?
Well, let them sink there in mid ocean,
And gaily sail on to the new.

Throw overboard toil misdirected,
Throw overboard ill-advised hope,
With aims which, your soul has detected,
Have self as their centre and scope.
Throw overboard useless regretting
For deeds which you cannot undo,
And learn the great art of forgetting
Old things which embitter the new.

Sing who will of dead years departed,
I shroud them and bid them adieu,
And the song that I sing, happy-hearted,
Is a song of the glorious new.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919)

2 JANUARY

Seven New Year Resolutions

To harvest every morning
with cool-cropping YES

To jump every hurdle
with wind-topping ease

To challenge every mine
with open-popping question

To cherish every kiss
with heart-stopping thrill

To walk every street
with hip-hopping stride

To welcome every sleep
with body-flopping bliss

Simply to wake to the world
with baby-bopping eyes

John Agard (1949–)

3 JANUARY

Winter-Time

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies,
At morning in the dark I rise;
And shivering in my nakedness,
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit
To warm my frozen bones a bit;
Or with a reindeer-sled, explore
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap
Me in my comforter and cap;
The cold wind burns my face, and blows
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;
And tree and house, and hill and lake,
Are frosted like a wedding-cake.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894)

4 JANUARY

To a Snow-drop

Yes – punctual to thy time, thou’rt here again
As still thou art, though frost or rain may vary,
Most indefatigable Missionary!
Nor cold can check, nor fog thy pureness stain;
If sluggish snow lie heavy on the plain.
And Icicles blockade the rock-birds aery,
Yet thou, sweet child of hoary January,
Art here to harbinger the laggard train
Of vernal flowers. Beneath the penthouse low
The dripping eaves, and on the sunny slope
Of cottage garden, whether mark’d or no.
Thy meek head bends in undistinguished row.
A Blessing on thee, gentle bud of Hope,
That tells of life, beneath the dead white snow,
Ambleside, 1841.

Hartley Coleridge (1796–1849)

5 JANUARY

He had his dream

He had his dream, and all through life,
Worked up to it through toil and strife.
Afloat fore’er before his eyes,
It colored for him all his skies:
 The storm-cloud dark
 Above his bark,
The calm and listless vault of blue
Took on its hopeful hue,
It tintured every passing beam –
 He had his dream.

He labored hard and failed at last,
His sails too weak to bear the blast,
The raging tempests tore away
And sent his beating bark astray.
 But what cared he
 For wind or sea!
He said, ‘The tempest will be short,
My bark will come to port.’
He saw through every cloud a gleam –
 He had his dream.

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906)

6 JANUARY

The Passionate Man's Pilgrimage

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ONE AT THE POINT OF DEATH

LINES 1-18

Give me my scallop shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage,
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer,
No other balm will there be given,
Whilst my soul, like a white palmer,
Travelleth to the land of heaven;
Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains.
And there I will kiss
The bowl of bliss,
And drink my eternal fill
On every milken hill.
My soul will be adry before,
But after, it will thirst no more.

Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618)

7 JANUARY

'I Shine,' Says the Sun

'I shine,' says the sun,
 'To give the world light,'
'I glimmer,' adds the moon,
 'To beautify the night.'
'I ripple,' says the brook,
 'I whisper,' sighs the breeze,
'I patter,' laughs the rain,
 'We rustle,' call the trees
We dance,' nod the daisies,
 'I twinkle,' shines the star,
'We sing,' chant the birds,
 'How happy we all are!'
'I smile,' cries the child,
 Gentle, good, and gay;
The sweetest thing of all,
 The sunshine of each day.

Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888)