

Literary poem samples

#1 A Grape

A grape will always be a grape.
It can never grow into a watermelon's girth.
No matter how badly it wants to burst.
You see there is no escape.
Because a grape will always be a grape.
It will never exude the heady fragrance of a cantaloupe.
Or boast the juicy flow of a peach.
Or cause the oooohhs and ahhhhs of strawberries dripping with cream.
A grape will always be a grape.
Wow.....it seems kind of mean.
Even more because a grape has skin so thin,
so easy to crack with disappointment and leak it's sadness.
Even in a garden full of gladness.
Even in a cluster of like others.
A grape is a lonely fruit.
So small, so delicate,
not enough seeds inside to fill its' true needs.
Its' desire to be something more.
Something bigger.
Something grander.
Something remembered for a very long time.
For who remembers a grape really?
We get thrown into barrels and squashed with bare feet,
our bodies broken, split apart, stuffed between strangers' steel toes.
Eventually we get transformed into what some call the "Devil's Juice".

But others hold a different view.

And value the wine we little grapes weep.

We get changed at last.

We are fire in human veins now, exciting dance and laughter,
 medicine for pain, balm for broken hearts, for dreams torn apart.

How mighty we little ones have become, suffering together.

Having never thought it could ever be done.

Until brother joined brother, one by one.

In vino et Veritas

In wine there is truth

#2 poem

Pomegranate heart

My heart is a pomegranate

Thick-skinned

Full of pithy seeds seeped in blood red juice

The consistency of blood mixed with tears

The seeds never touch

Each one remains isolated in its' own little cellulose

prison.....like picky kids who won't let their food touch

Each pomegranate seed is a wound, a hurt, an instance of self-hatred

Like shrapnel packed into a grenade

My chest hurts a lot

But how to relieve the pressure inside?

Why don't they teach this shit in school?

Something useful, instead of $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$,
which nobody ever really uses again

If your heart is full of painful memories
like jellybeans crammed into a jar,
how can you calculate if it's too many, danger-zone, BOOM-BOOM time?
I fear my packed heart will detonate when I least expect it
My counselor says, "Just breathe. Count slowly from one to ten-"
So I count for her, like a trained monkey

In fifth grade I convinced two doctors to operate on me
My throat hurts. My stomach, too
Junior Munchausen.

I couldn't believe my lies worked
Because when I peeled back the surgical tape,
instead of my child's smooth white skin, uncut,
I saw a bloody wound stitched tightly up.
It throbbed.

My illusions dashed that adults had a fucking clue
Grandmother, whom I rarely saw, visited,
even brought me a small box of hard heart shaped candies
Daddy, whose favorite saying was "Go play. I don't wanna see your face for the rest of the day-"
carried me home, settled me in his big bed
Ice cream was delivered upon command.
It was all worth it.

Each surgery was another bloody seed secreted in my heart,

warehoused with our family's other sick trophies:
two siblings and a mother dead from fentanyl ODs.
I fear one day I will conduct my own surgery and
cut my heart out to end the pain
Already I'm slicing my arms and legs, practicing.

Each Easter, one of my teachers sets a huge jar
of sealed jellybeans on her desk,
and chipper students jot down their guesses,
hoping to win the prize, the lot.
I avoided that jar like the plague.
It reminded me of my pomegranate heart.
But one day, my teacher thrust a slip of paper into my hand.
"Come on. Have some fun-" she goaded.
I was a straight A student, serious, even dour.
She never even noticed the stripes of blood seeping through my shirt sleeves.
Her fake smile was scary as a clown's.
Her blue eye shadow was excessive.
Her teeth were starting to gray.
Dyed black hair was thinning heavily in the center of her head,
revealing a shiny baseball-sized target.
To her horror, I bashed the heavy jar of candy off her desk.
Jellybeans skittered wildly across the floor,
bounced off her skull, ricocheted off walls,
pelted stunned students,
along with shrapnels of glass which drew droplets and slashes

of blood across their bland foreheads and cheeks.
A snake of blood wriggled around my teacher's neck.
I smiled at her.
At least my smile was real.

#3 poem

Old Man

The ache in my bones hitches me to a horse
galloping in one direction
incapable of return
I plead for release from the awful pain
But the horse keeps galloping without change
"I didn't choose this path-" I mutter out loud
The horse doesn't care how sad
my body has withered over the years
He has a job to do and no tears will stop him
He gallops so fast, so hard
There is no chance to jump off
You are headed to a strange land
It was nothing that you planned
Pray pray when you reach the end
You will find a friendly hand to help you dismount
Because on this trip every human soul can count
Pray pray pray the whole way
That grace awaits you

