

A FROSTY NIGHT

BY ROBERT GRAVES

Mother: Sweet, my dear, what ails you,
Dazed and white and
shaken?
Has the chill night numbed
you?
Is it fright you have taken?

Alice: Mother, I am very well;
I felt never better.
Mother, do not hold me so,
Let me write my letter.

Mother: Alice, love, what ails you?

Alice: Nay, but I am well.
The night was cold and frosty;
There's no more to tell.

Mother: Ay, the night was frosty,
Coldly gaped the moon;
But the birds seemed twitter-
ing
Through green boughs of
June.

Soft and thick the snow lay,
Stars danced in the sky:
Not all the lambs of May Day
Skip so bold and high.

Your feet were dancing, Alice,
Seemed to dance on air,
You looked a ghost or angel
In the starlight there.

Your eyes were frosted star-
light,
Your heart, fire and snow;
Who was it said 'I love you'?

Alice: Mother, let me go!

The Owl

SOMETHING

BY ROBERT NICHOLS

How long I have wished for something
I know well,
But what that something is I cannot
tell.

So often at sunrise in sad tears I wake
Shivering with longing for its sake;

So often at noontide when the house is
still
It sickens me with its unbidden ill;

So often at twilight it does not seem
far,
Not further than the first and far-off
star;

All, all my life is built toward its token
Yet by its near far-offness I am broken.

For I am ever under something's spell,
But what that something is I cannot
tell.

The Owl

THE MASTER AND THE LEAVES

BY THOMAS HARDY

'We are budding, master, budding,
We of your favorite tree;
March drought and April flooding
Arouse us merrily.
The stemlets brightly studding;
And yet you do not see.

'We are fully woven for summer
In modes of limpest green,
The twitterer and the hummer
Here rest their rounds between,
While like a "long-roll" drummer
The night-hawk thrills the green.

'We are turning yellow, master,
And next we are turning red,
And faster then and faster
Shall seek our rooty bed —
All wasted in disaster
The magic show we spread!'

'I mark your early going,
And that you'll soon be clay,
I have seen your summer showing
As in my youthful day;
But why I seem unknowing
Is too deep down to say.

The Owl