As I Grew Older

It was a long time ago.
I have almost forgotten my dream.
But it was there then
In front of me,
Bright as a sun—
My dream.

And then the wall rose,
Rose slowly,
Slowly,
Dimming,
Hiding.
The light of my dream.
Rose until it touched the sky—
The wall.

Shadow.
I am black.
I lie down in the shadow . . .
Above me only the thick wall . . .
My hands!
Break through the wall and find my dream . . .
Thousand whirling dreams of sun.

- Langston Hughes

Backyard Dreams

looking out over the silent garden
the wind carries the voices
cinderella dressed in
of the children who adores
yella went upstairs to kiss a
this place only yesterday
fella made a mistake
but are now adults who will not remember
and kissed a snake so how
the empty tree weeps and
many doctors did it take
the faded ball is motionless as
one two three four
the grass leans to listen
aw too bad
yearning to hear the memories
you’re out

- Alleen Barber

I’m Nobody

I’m Nobody! Who are you?
    Are you – Nobody – too?
Then there’s a pair of us!
    Don’t tell! They’d banish us –
you know!

How dreary – to be Somebody!
    How public – like a Frog –
To tell your name – the livelong
June –
    To an admiring Bog!

- Emily Dickinson

We Real Cool

    The Pool Players.
    Seven at the Golden Shovel.

We real cool. We
Left school. We
Lurk late. We
Strike straight. We

Sing sin. We
Thin gin. We
Jazz June. We
Die soon.

- Gwendolyn Brooks

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The Lockless Door

It went many years
But at last came a knock,
And I thought of the door
With no lock to lock.

I blew out the light,
I tiptoed the floor,
And raised both hands
In a prayer to the door.

But the knock came again.
My window was wide;
I climbed on the sill
And descended outside.

Back over the sill
I bade a “Come in”
To whatever the knock
At the door may have been.

So at a knock
I emptied my cage
To hide in the world
And alter with age.