**Spoon River Monologue Choices**

**For Voice 1 Class**

**Female Monologues:**

**Hannah Armstrong**

I WROTE him a letter asking him for old times, sake
To discharge my sick boy from the army;
But maybe he couldn't read it.
Then I went to town and had James Garber,
Who wrote beautifully, write him a letter.
But maybe that was lost in the mails.
So I traveled all the way to Washington.
I was more than an hour finding the White House.
And when I found it they turned me away,
Hiding their smiles.
Then I thought: "Oh, well, he ain't the same as when I boarded him
And he and my husband worked together
And all of us called him Abe, there in Menard."
As a last attempt I turned to a guard and said:
"Please say it's old Aunt Hannah Armstrong
From Illinois, come to see him about her sick boy
In the army."
Well, just in a moment they let me in!
And when he saw me he broke in a laugh,
And dropped his business as president,
And wrote in his own hand Doug's discharge,
Talking the while of the early days,
And telling stories.

Pauline Barrett

ALMOST the shell of a woman after the surgeon's knife
And almost a year to creep back into strength,
Till the dawn of our wedding decennial
Found me my seeming self again.
We walked the forest together,
By a path of soundless moss and turf.
But I could not look in your eyes,
And you could not look in my eyes,
For such sorrow was ours--the beginning of gray in your hair.
And I but a shell of myself.
And what did we talk of--sky and water,
Anything, 'most, to hide our thoughts.
And then your gift of wild roses,
Set on the table to grace our dinner.
Poor heart, how bravely you struggled
To imagine and live a remembered rapture!
Then my spirit drooped as the night came on,
And you left me alone in my room for a while,
As you did when I was a bride, poor heart.
And I looked in the mirror and something said:
"One should be all dead when one is half-dead--"
Nor ever mock life, nor ever cheat love."
And I did it looking there in the mirror--
Dear, have you ever understood?

**Mrs. Charles Bliss**

REVEREND WILEY advised me not to divorce him
For the sake of the children,
And Judge Somers advised him the same.
So we stuck to the end of the path.
But two of the children thought he was right,
And two of the children thought I was right.
And the two who sided with him blamed me,
And the two who sided with me blamed him,
And they grieved for the one they sided with.
And all were torn with the guilt of judging,
And tortured in soul because they could not admire
Equally him and me.
Now every gardener knows that plants grown in cellars
Or under stones are twisted and yellow and weak.
And no mother would let her baby suck
Diseased milk from her breast.
Yet preachers and judges advise the raising of souls
Where there is no sunlight, but only twilight,
No warmth, but only dampness and cold--
Preachers and judges!

**Sarah Brown**

MAURICE, weep not, I am not here under this pine tree.
The balmy air of spring whispers through the sweet grass,
The stars sparkle, the whippoorwill calls,
But thou grievest, while my soul lies rapturous
In the blest Nirvana of eternal light!
Go to the good heart that is my husband
Who broods upon what he calls our guilty love:--
Tell him that my love for you, no less than my love for him
Wrought out my destiny-- that through the flesh
I won spirit, and through spirit, peace.
There is no marriage in heaven
But there is love.

**Elizabeth Childers**

DUST of my dust,
And dust with my dust,
O, child who died as you entered the world,
Dead with my death!
Not knowing
Breath, though you tried so hard,
With a heart that beat when you lived with me,
And stopped when you left me for Life.
It is well, my child.
For you never traveled
The long, long way that begins with school days,
When little fingers blur under the tears
That fall on the crooked letters.
And the earliest wound, when a little mate
Leaves you alone for another;
And sickness, and the face of
Fear by the bed;
The death of a father or mother;
Or shame for them, or poverty;
The maiden sorrow of school days ended;
And eyeless Nature that makes you drink
From the cup of Love, though you know it's poisoned;
To whom would your flower-face have been lifted?
Botanist, weakling?
Cry of what blood to yours?--
Pure or foul, for it makes no matter,
It's blood that calls to our blood.
And then your children--oh, what might they be?
And what your sorrow?
Child! Child Death is better than Life.

Aner Clute

OVER and over they used to ask me,
While buying the wine or the beer,
In Peoria first, and later in Chicago,
Denver, Frisco, New York, wherever I lived
How I happened to lead the life,
And what was the start of it.
Well, I told them a silk dress,
And a promise of marriage from a rich man--
It was Lucius Atherton.
But that was not really it at all.
Suppose a boy steals an apple
From the tray at the grocery store,
And they all begin to call him a thief,
The editor, minister, judge, and all the people--
"A thief," "a thief," "a thief," wherever he goes
And he can't get work, and he can't get bread
Without stealing it, why the boy will steal.
It's the way the people regard the theft of the apple
That makes the boy what he is.

Minerva Jones
I AM Minerva, the village poetess,
Hooted at, jeered at by the Yahoos of the street
For my heavy body, cock-eye, and rolling walk,
And all the more when "Butch" Weldy
Captured me after a brutal hunt.
He left me to my fate with Doctor Meyers;
And I sank into death, growing numb from the feet up,
Like one stepping deeper and deeper into a stream of ice.
Will some one go to the village newspaper,
And gather into a book the verses I wrote?--
I thirsted so for love
I hungered so for life!

Mrs. Kessler
MR. KESSLER, you know, was in the army,
And he drew six dollars a month as a pension,
And stood on the corner talking politics,
Or sat at home reading Grant's Memoirs;
And I supported the family by washing,
Learning the secrets of all the people
From their curtains, counterpanes, shirts and skirts.
For things that are new grow old at length,
They're replaced with better or none at all:
People are prospering or falling back.
And rents and patches widen with time;
No thread or needle can pace decay,
And there are stains that baffle soap,
And there are colors that run in spite of you,
Blamed though you are for spoiling a dress.
Handkerchiefs, napery, have their secrets--
The laundress, Life, knows all about it.
And I, who went to all the funerals  
Held in Spoon River, swear I never  
Saw a dead face without thinking it looked  
Like something washed and ironed.

**Nancy Knapp**

WELL, don't you see this was the way of it:  
We bought the farm with what he inherited,  
And his brothers and sisters accused him of poisoning  
His fathers mind against the rest of them.  
And we never had any peace with our treasure.  
The murrain took the cattle, and the crops failed.  
And lightning struck the granary.  
So we mortgaged the farm to keep going.  
And he grew silent and was worried all the time.  
Then some of the neighbors refused to speak to us,  
And took sides with his brothers and sisters.  
And I had no place to turn, as one may say to himself,  
At an earlier time in life;  
"No matter, so and so is my friend, or I can shake this off  
With a little trip to Decatur."

Then the dreadfullest smells infested the rooms.
So I set fire to the beds and the old witch-house
Went up in a roar of flame,
As I danced in the yard with waving arms,
While he wept like a freezing steer.

**Lucinda Matlock**

I WENT to the dances at Chandlerville,
And played snap-out at Winchester.
One time we changed partners,
Driving home in the moonlight of middle June,
And then I found Davis.
We were married and lived together for seventy years,
Enjoying, working, raising the twelve children,
Eight of whom we lost
Ere I had reached the age of sixty.
I spun,
I wove,
I kept the house,
I nursed the sick,
I made the garden, and for holiday
Rambled over the fields where sang the larks,
And by Spoon River gathering many a shell,
And many a flower and medicinal weed--
Shouting to the wooded hills, singing to the green valleys.
At ninety--six I had lived enough, that is all,
And passed to a sweet repose.
What is this I hear of sorrow and weariness,
Anger, discontent and drooping hopes?
Degenerate sons and daughters,
Life is too strong for you--
It takes life to love Life.

Mrs. Merritt
SILENT before the jury
Returning no word to the judge when he asked me
If I had aught to say against the sentence,
Only shaking my head.
What could I say to people who thought
That a woman of thirty-five was at fault
When her lover of nineteen killed her husband?
Even though she had said to him over and over,
"Go away, Elmer, go far away,
I have maddened your brain with the gift of my body:
You will do some terrible thing."
And just as I feared, he killed my husband;
With which I had nothing to do, before God!
Silent for thirty years in prison
And the iron gates of Joliet
Swung as the gray and silent trusties
Carried me out in a coffin.

**Georgine Sand Miner**

A STEPMOTHER drove me from home, embittering me.
A squaw-man, a flaneur and dilettante took my virtue.
For years I was his mistress--no one knew.
I learned from him the parasite cunning
With which I moved with the bluffs, like a flea on a dog.
All the time I was nothing but "very private," with different men.
Then Daniel, the radical, had me for years.
His sister called me his mistress;
And Daniel wrote me:
"Shameful word, soiling our beautiful love!"
But my anger coiled, preparing its fangs.
My Lesbian friend next took a hand.
She hated Daniel's sister.
And Daniel despised her midget husband.
And she saw a chance for a poisonous thrust:
I must complain to the wife of Daniel's pursuit!
But before I did that I begged him to fly to London with me.
"Why not stay in the city just as we have?" he asked.
Then I turned submarine and revenged his repulse
In the arms of my dilettante friend.
Then up to the surface, Bearing the letter that Daniel wrote me
To prove my honor was all intact, showing it to his wife,
My Lesbian friend and everyone.
If Daniel had only shot me dead!
Instead of stripping me naked of lies
A harlot in body and soul.

**Mrs. Benjamin Pantier**
I know that he told that I snared his soul
With a snare which bled him to death.
And all the men loved him,
And most of the women pitied him.
But suppose you are really a lady, and have delicate tastes,
And loathe the smell of whiskey and onions,
And the rhythm of Wordsworth's "Ode" runs in your ears,
While he goes about from morning till night
Repeating bits of that common thing;
"Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"
And then, suppose;
You are a woman well endowed,
And the only man with whom the law and morality
Permit you to have the marital relation
Is the very man that fills you with disgust
Every time you think of it while you think of it
Every time you see him?
That's why I drove him away from home
To live with his dog in a dingy room
Back of his office.

**Rosie Roberts**

I WAS sick, but more than that, I was mad
At the crooked police, and the crooked game of life.
So I wrote to the Chief of Police at Peoria:
"I am here in my girlhood home in Spoon River,
Gradually wasting away.
But come and take me, I killed the son
Of the merchant prince, in Madam Lou's
And the papers that said he killed himself
In his home while cleaning a hunting gun--
Lied like the devil to hush up scandal
For the bribe of advertising.
In my room I shot him, at Madam Lou's,
Because he knocked me down when I said
That, in spite of all the money he had,
I'd see my lover that night."

**Russian Sonia**

I, BORN in Weimar
Of a mother who was French
And German father, a most learned professor,
Orphaned at fourteen years,
Became a dancer, known as Russian Sonia,
All up and down the boulevards of Paris,
Mistress betimes of sundry dukes and counts,
And later of poor artists and of poets.
At forty years, passe, I sought New York
And met old Patrick Hummer on the boat,
Red-faced and hale, though turned his sixtieth year,
Returning after having sold a ship-load
Of cattle in the German city, Hamburg.
He brought me to Spoon River and we lived here
For twenty years--they thought that we were married
This oak tree near me is the favorite haunt
Of blue jays chattering, chattering all the day.
And why not? for my very dust is laughing
For thinking of the humorous thing called life.

Elsa Wertman

I WAS a peasant girl from Germany,
Blue-eyed, rosy, happy and strong.
And the first place I worked was at Thomas Greene's.
On a summer's day when she was away
He stole into the kitchen and took me
Right in his arms and kissed me on my throat,
I turning my head. Then neither of us
Seemed to know what happened.
And I cried for what would become of me.
And cried and cried as my secret began to show.
One day Mrs. Greene said she understood,
And would make no trouble for me,
And, being childless, would adopt it.
(He had given her a farm to be still. )
So she hid in the house and sent out rumors,
As if it were going to happen to her.
And all went well and the child was born--
They were so kind to me.
Later I married Gus Wertman, and years passed.
But-- at political rallies when sitters-by thought I was crying
At the eloquence of Hamilton Greene--
That was not it. No! I wanted to say:
That's my son!
That's my son.

Dora Williams
WHEN Reuben Pantier ran away and threw me
I went to Springfield. There I met a lush,
Whose father just deceased left him a fortune.
He married me when drunk.
My life was wretched.
A year passed and one day they found him dead.
That made me rich. I moved on to Chicago.
After a time met Tyler Rountree, villain.
I moved on to New York. A gray-haired magnate
Went mad about me--so another fortune.
He died one night right in my arms, you know.
(I saw his purple face for years thereafter.)
There was almost a scandal.
I moved on, This time to Paris. I was now a woman,
Insidious, subtle, versed in the world and rich.
My sweet apartment near the Champs Elysees
Became a center for all sorts of people,
Musicians, poets, dandies, artists, nobles,
Where we spoke French and German, Italian, English.
I wed Count Navigato, native of Cenoa.
We went to Rome. He poisoned me, I think.
Now in the Campo Santo overlooking
The sea where young Columbus dreamed new worlds,
See what they chiseled: "Contessa Navigato
Implora eterna quiete."

Male Monologues:

Harold Arnett

I LEANED against the mantel, sick, sick,
Thinking of my failure, looking into the abyss,
Weak from the noon-day heat.
A church bell sounded mournfully far away,
I heard the cry of a baby,
And the coughing of John Yarnell,
Bed-ridden, feverish, feverish, dying,
Then the violent voice of my wife:
"Watch out, the potatoes are burning!"
I smelled them . . . then there was irresistible disgust.
I pulled the trigger . . . blackness . . . light . . .
Unspeakable regret . . . fumbling for the world again.
Too late! Thus I came here,
With lungs for breathing . . . one cannot breathe here with lungs,
Though one must breathe
Of what use is it To rid one's self of the world,
When no soul may ever escape the eternal destiny of life?

Lucius Atherton

WHEN my moustache curled,
And my hair was black,
And I wore tight trousers
And a diamond stud,
I was an excellent knave of hearts and took many a trick.
But when the gray hairs began to appear--
Lo! a new generation of girls
Laughed at me, not fearing me,
And I had no more exciting adventures
Wherein I was all but shot for a heartless devil,
But only drabby affairs, warmed-over affairs
Of other days and other men.
And time went on until I lived at
Mayer's restaurant,
Partaking of short-orders, a gray, untidy,
Toothless, discarded, rural Don Juan. . . .
There is a mighty shade here who sings
Of one named Beatrice;
And I see now that the force that made him great
Drove me to the dregs of life.

**Wendell P. Bloyd**

THEY first charged me with disorderly conduct,
There being no statute on blasphemy.
Later they locked me up as insane
Where I was beaten to death by a Catholic guard.
My offense was this:
I said God lied to Adam, and destined him
To lead the life of a fool,
Ignorant that there is evil in the world as well as good.
And when Adam outwitted God by eating the apple
And saw through the lie,
God drove him out of Eden to keep him from taking
The fruit of immortal life.
For Christ's sake, you sensible people,
Here's what God Himself says about it in the book of Genesis:
"And the Lord God said, behold the man
Is become as one of us" --a little envy, you see,
"To know good and evil"--The all-is-good lie exposed:
"And now lest he put forth his hand and take
Also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever:
Therefore the Lord God sent Him forth from the garden of Eden."
The reason I believe God crucified His Own Son
To get out of the wretched tangle is, because it sounds just like Him.

**Robert Southey Burke**
I SPENT my money trying to elect you Mayor,
A. D. Blood.
I lavished my admiration upon you,
You were to my mind the almost perfect man.
You devoured my personality,
And the idealism of my youth,
And the strength of a high-souled fealty.
And all my hopes for the world,
And all my beliefs in Truth,
Were smelted up in the blinding heat
Of my devotion to you,
And molded into your image.
And then when I found what you were:
That your soul was small
And your words were false
As your blue-white porcelain teeth,
And your cuffs of celluloid,
I hated the love I had for you,
I hated myself, I hated you
For my wasted soul, and wasted youth.
And I say to all, beware of ideals,
Beware of giving your love away
To any man alive.

Eugene Carman
RHODES, slave! Selling shoes and gingham,  
Flour and bacon, overalls, clothing, all day long  
For fourteen hours a day for three hundred and thirteen days  
For more than twenty years.  
Saying "Yes'm" and "Yes, sir", and "Thank you"  
A thousand times a day, and all for fifty dollars a month.  
Living in this stinking room in the rattle-trap "Commercial."  
And compelled to go to Sunday School, and to listen  
To the Rev. Abner Peet one hundred and four times a year  
For more than an hour at a time,  
Because Thomas Rhodes ran the church  
As well as the store and the bank.  
So while I was tying my neck-tie that morning  
I suddenly saw myself in the glass:  
My hair all gray, my face like a sodden pie.  
So I cursed and cursed: You damned old thing  
You cowardly dog! You rotten pauper!  
You Rhodes' slave! Till Roger Baughman  
Thought I was having a fight with some one,  
And looked through the transom just in time  
To see me fall on the floor in a heap  
From a broken vein in my head.
Robert Davidson

I GREW spiritually fat living off the souls of men.
If I saw a soul that was strong
I wounded its pride and devoured its strength.
The shelters of friendship knew my cunning
For where I could steal a friend I did so.
And wherever I could enlarge my power
By undermining ambition, I did so,
Thus to make smooth my own.
And to triumph over other souls,
Just to assert and prove my superior strength,
Was with me a delight,
The keen exhilaration of soul gymnastics.
Devouring souls, I should have lived forever.
But their undigested remains bred in me a deadly nephritis,
With fear, restlessness, sinking spirits,
Hatred, suspicion, vision disturbed.
I collapsed at last with a shriek.
Remember the acorn;
It does not devour other acorns.
State's Attorney Fallas

I, THE scourge-wielder, balance-wrecker,
Smiter with whips and swords;
I, hater of the breakers of the law;
I, legalist, inexorable and bitter,
Driving the jury to hang the madman, Barry Holden,
Was made as one dead by light too bright for eyes,
And woke to face a Truth with bloody brow:
Steel forceps fumbled by a doctor's hand
Against my boy's head as he entered life
Made him an idiot. I turned to books of science
To care for him.
That's how the world of those whose minds are sick
Became my work in life, and all my world.
Poor ruined boy! You were, at last, the potter
And I and all my deeds of charity
The vessels of your hand.

Willard Fluke

MY wife lost her health,
And dwindled until she weighed scarce ninety pounds.
Then that woman, whom the men
Styled Cleopatra, came along.
And we-- we married ones
All broke our vows, myself among the rest.
Years passed and one by one
Death claimed them all in some hideous form
And I was borne along by dreams
Of God's particular grace for me,
And I began to write, write, write, reams on reams
Of the second coming of Christ.
Then Christ came to me and said,
"Go into the church and stand before the congregation
And confess your sin."
But just as I stood up and began to speak
I saw my little girl, who was sitting in the front seat--
My little girl who was born blind!
After that, all is blackness.

**Searcy Foote**

I WANTED to go away to college
But rich Aunt Persis wouldn't help me.
So I made gardens and raked the lawns
And bought John Alden's books with my earnings
And toiled for the very means of life.
I wanted to marry Delia Prickett,
But how could I do it with what I earned?
And there was Aunt Persis more than seventy
Who sat in a wheel-chair half alive
With her throat so paralyzed, when she swallowed
The soup ran out of her mouth like a duck--
A gourmand yet, investing her income
In mortgages, fretting all the time
About her notes and rents and papers.
That day I was sawing wood for her,
And reading Proudhon in between.
I went in the house for a drink of water,
And there she sat asleep in her chair,
And Proudhon lying on the table,
And a bottle of chloroform on the book,
She used sometimes for an aching tooth!
I poured the chloroform on a handkerchief
And held it to her nose till she died.--
Oh Delia, Delia, you and Proudhon
Steadied my hand, and the coroner
Said she died of heart failure.
I married Delia and got the money--
A joke on you, Spoon River?

Harry Carey Goodhue
YOU never marveled, dullards of Spoon River,
When Chase Henry voted against the saloons
To revenge himself for being shut off.
But none of you was keen enough
To follow my steps, or trace me home
As Chase's spiritual brother.
Do you remember when I fought
The bank and the courthouse ring,
For pocketing the interest on public funds?
And when I fought our leading citizens
For making the poor the pack-horses of the taxes?
And when I fought the water works
For stealing streets and raising rates?
And when I fought the business men
Who fought me in these fights?
Then do you remember:
That staggering up from the wreck of defeat,
And the wreck of a ruined career,
I slipped from my cloak my last ideal,
Hidden from all eyes until then,
Like the cherished jawbone of an ass,
And smote the bank and the water works,
And the business men with prohibition,
And made Spoon River pay the cost
Of the fights that I had lost?

**Barry Holden**

THE very fall my sister Nancy Knapp
Set fire to the house
They were trying Dr. Duval
For the murder of Zora Clemens,
And I sat in the court two weeks
Listening to every witness.
It was clear he had got her in a family
And to let the child be born
Would not do.
Well, how about me with eight children,
And one coming, and the farm
Mortgaged to Thomas Rhodes?
And when I got home that night,
(After listening to the story of the buggy ride,
And the finding of Zora in the ditch,)
The first thing I saw, right there by the steps,
Where the boys had hacked for angle worms,
Was the hatchet!
And just as I entered there was my wife,
Standing before me, big with child.
She started the talk of the mortgaged farm,
And I killed her.

"Indignation" Jones
You would not believe, would you
That I came from good Welsh stock?
That I was purer blooded than the white trash here?
And of more direct lineage than the
New Englanders And Virginians of Spoon River?
You would not believe that I had been to school
And read some books.
You saw me only as a run-down man
With matted hair and beard
And ragged clothes.
Sometimes a man's life turns into a cancer
From being bruised and continually bruised,
And swells into a purplish mass
Like growths on stalks of corn.
Here was I, a carpenter, mired in a bog of life
Into which I walked, thinking it was a meadow,
With a slattern for a wife, and poor Minerva, my daughter,
Whom you tormented and drove to death.
So I crept, crept, like a snail through the days
Of my life.
No more you hear my footsteps in the morning,
Resounding on the hollow sidewalk
Going to the grocery store for a little corn meal
And a nickel's worth of bacon.

Jack McGuire
THEY would have lynched me
Had I not been secretly hurried away
To the jail at Peoria.
And yet I was going peacefully home,
Carrying my jug, a little drunk,
When Logan, the marshal, halted me
Called me a drunken hound and shook me
And, when I cursed him for it, struck me
With that Prohibition loaded cane--
All this before I shot him.
They would have hanged me except for this:
My lawyer, Kinsey Keene, was helping to land
Old Thomas Rhodes for wrecking the bank,
And the judge was a friend of
Rhodes And wanted him to escape,
And Kinsey offered to quit on
Rhodes For fourteen years for me.
And the bargain was made.
I served my time
And learned to read and write.

Paul McNeely
DEAR Jane! dear winsome Jane!
How you stole in the room (where I lay so ill)
In your nurse's cap and linen cuffs,
And took my hand and said with a smile:
"You are not so ill-you'll soon be well."
And how the liquid thought of your eyes
Sank in my eyes like dew that slips
Into the heart of a flower.
Dear Jane! the whole McNeely fortune
Could not have bought your care of me,
By day and night, and night and day;
Nor paid for you smile, nor the warmth of your soul,
In your little hands laid on my brow.
Jane, till the flame of life went out
In the dark above the disk of night
I longed and hoped to be well again
To pillow my head on your little breasts,
And hold you fast in a clasp of love-
Did my father provide for you when he died,
Jane, dear Jane?

Washington McNeely
RICH, honored by my fellow citizens,
The father of many children, born of a noble mother,
All raised there
In the great mansion--house, at the edge of town.
Note the cedar tree on the lawn!
I sent all the boys to Ann Arbor, all of the girls to Rockford,
The while my life went on, getting more riches and honors--
Resting under my cedar tree at evening.
The years went on. I sent the girls to Europe;
I dowered them when married.
I gave the boys money to start in business.
They were strong children, promising as apples
Before the bitten places show.
But John fled the country in disgrace.
Jenny died in child-birth--
I sat under my cedar tree.
Harry killed himself after a debauch, Susan was divorced--
I sat under my cedar tree. Paul was invalided from over study,
Mary became a recluse at home for love of a man--
I sat under my cedar tree.
All were gone, or broken-winged or devoured by life--
I sat under my cedar tree.
My mate, the mother of them, was taken--
I sat under my cedar tree,
Till ninety years were tolled.
O maternal Earth, which rocks the fallen leaf to sleep.

**Benjamin Pantier**

TOGETHER in this grave lie Benjamin Pantier, attorney at law,
And Nig, his dog, constant companion, solace and friend.
Down the gray road, friends, children, men and women,
Passing one by one out of life, left me till I was alone
With Nig for partner, bed-fellow; comrade in drink.
In the morning of lief I knew aspiration and saw dlory,
The she, who survives me, snared my soul
With a snare which bled me to death,
Till I, once strong of will, lay broken, indifferent,
Living with Nig in a room back of a dingy office.
Under my Jaw-bone is snuggled the bony nose of Nig
Our story is lost in silence. Go by, Mad world!

Reuben Pantier
WELL, Emily Sparks, your prayers were not wasted,
Your love was not all in vain.
I owe whatever I was in life
To your hope that would not give me up,
To your love that saw me still as good.
Dear Emily Sparks, let me tell you the story.
I pass the effect of my father and mother;
The milliner's daughter made me trouble
And out I went in the world,
Where I passed through every peril known
Of wine and women and joy of life.
One night, in a room in the Rue de Rivoli,
I was drinking wine with a black-eyed cocotte,
And the tears swam into my eyes.
She though they were amorous tears and smiled
For thought of her conquest over me.
But my soul was three thousand miles away,
In the days when you taught me in Spoon River.
And just because you no more could love me,
Nor pray for me, nor write me letters,
The eternal silence of you spoke instead.
And the Black-eyed cocotte took the tears for hers,
As well as the deceiving kisses I gave her.
Somehow, from that hour, I had a new vision
Dear Emily Sparks!

**Butch Weldy**

AFTER I got religion and steadied down
They gave me a job in the canning works,
And every morning I had to fill
The tank in the yard with gasoline,
That fed the blow-fires in the sheds
To heat the soldering irons.
And I mounted a rickety ladder to do it,
Carrying buckets full of the stuff.
One morning, as I stood there pouring,
The air grew still and seemed to heave,
And I shot up as the tank exploded,
And down I came with both legs broken,
And my eyes burned crisp as a couple of eggs.
For someone left a blow--fire going,
And something sucked the flame in the tank.
The Circuit Judge said whoever did it
Was a fellow-servant of mine, and so
Old Rhodes' son didn't have to pay me.
And I sat on the witness stand as blind
As lack the Fiddler, saying over and over,
"I didn't know him at all."