Imagery Poems

The Conquerors
—Henry Treece

By sundown we came to a hidden village
Where all the air was still
And no sound met our ears, save
For the sorry drip of rain from blackened trees
And the melancholy song of swinging gates.
Then through a broken pane some of us saw
A dead bird in a rusting cage, still
Pressing his thin, tattered breast against the bars,
His beak wide open. And
As we hurried through the weed-grown street,
A gaunt dog started up from some dark place
And shambled off on legs as thin as sticks
Into the wood to die at last in peace.
No one had told us victory was like this:
Not one amongst us would have eaten bread
Before he’d filled the mouth of the gray child
That sprawled, stiff as stone, before the shattered door
There was not one of us who did not think of home.

Meeting at Night
Robert Browning

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i’ the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross until a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each.

“When Iowa Was Washed Away with Milk”
—Kevin Pilkington

I put down my book
to watch the snow falling
in the backyard.
It started an hour ago
but is already deeper
than Keats.

Downstairs Maureen is baking—
the kitchen, oven warm
and cookie stuffed. I joke
the white spot on her nose is snow
not flour then sit and wait.

After Sinatra, the radio
warns blizzard and I’m warned
to take just one.
I choose an oatmeal shaped
like Iowa, first nibbling
on the northern end of the state
until it cools, then chomp south.

When I reach a raisin
that must be Des Moines
I wash what’s left of the state
down with a glass of milk
and begin eyeing Colorado.

Keats: John Keats, a famous English poet
Try writing an image poem of your own. Chose one of the sets of words below. Use all of the nouns in an image poem that creates a definite mood. Write your poem in the space below.

1. window, door, mirror, frame, mist, moonlight

2. Shadow, street lamp, puddle, gutter, paper

3. Field, sun, soccer ball, sneaker, blade of grass

4. Shop, saw, wood, dust, ray of light, thumb

5. Sand, wave, sailboat, sun, reflection