

September, 1918

By Amy Lowell

This afternoon was the colour of water falling through sunlight;
The trees glittered with the tumbling of leaves;
The sidewalks shone like alleys of dropped maple leaves,
And the houses ran along them laughing out of square, open windows.
Under a tree in the park,
Two little boys, lying flat on their faces,
Were carefully gathering red berries
To put in a pasteboard box.
Some day there will be no war,
Then I shall take out this afternoon
And turn it in my fingers,
And remark the sweet taste of it upon my palate,
And note the crisp variety of its flights of leaves.
To-day I can only gather it
And put it into my lunch-box,
For I have time for nothing
But the endeavour to balance myself
Upon a broken world.

Amy Lowell, "September, 1918" from *The Complete Poetical Works of Amy Lowell*. Copyright © 1955 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Copyright © renewed 1983 by Houghton Mifflin Company, Brinton P. Roberts, and G. D'Andelot, Esquire. Reprinted with the permission of Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

Source: Selected Poems of Amy Lowell (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002)



Born in Brookline, Massachusetts, Lowell was the last of five children. The New England family possessed vast wealth and was distinguished in education and the arts: Amy's great-uncle, James Russell Lowell, was a leading nineteenth-century poet, her brother became President of Harvard, and a younger cousin, Robert Lowell, became a major poet after World War II. A flamboyant woman whose behavior belied her upbringing in a proper and prestigious New England family, she flouted convention with her proto-feminist poetry and unabashedly public persona. Like H.D.'s, Lowell's best poetry glitters with color and features vivid, concise depictions of nature.

[See More By This Poet](#)

