

Walt Whitman  
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# MODELS for Partner Poems - BOTH OF YOU MUST HAVE A COPY IN YOUR JOURNALS.

## MODEL POEM #1

LESSONS - by Judith Viorst

She was taught  
 If you don't get married you'll wind up a very  
 lonely person staring at the four walls, and  
 He was taught  
 If you don't finish law school you'll wind up an  
 object of contempt selling ties in an East Orange  
 haberdashery, and  
 She was taught  
 If you don't put a little something aside every  
 week you'll wind up a very lonely person being  
 thrown out on the sidewalk, and  
 He was taught  
 If you lend a friend your sport jacket he'll  
 perspire under the arms and it won't come out at  
 the cleaners and you'll wind up resentful, and  
 She was taught  
 If you don't have Blue Cross and Blue Shield  
 you'll wind up a very lonely person delirious in a hospital ward, and  
 He was taught  
 If you go to bed with girls they'll lie and say  
 they're pregnant and you'll wind up having to  
 marry them, and  
 She changed her name to Maya, and  
 He changed his name to Orfeo, and  
 They're living in a commune in the country  
 with collective housekeeping and organically grown  
 vegetables and the kinds of shatteringly honest relationships  
 That are only possible between men and women who  
 have renounced flush toilets and the telephone  
 company, and  
 As a result of working in the fields, and  
 washing in the streams, and  
 wearing simple homespun robes they  
 have freed their senses from the tyranny of the  
 intellect, and  
 turned in to the music of the cosmos, and  
 plumbed the secret depths of their inner most beings, BUT  
 She's still putting a little something aside every week, and  
 He's still not lending his jacket...  
 JUST IN CASE.

## Model Poem #2

WING TEK LUM

Wing Tek Lum lives in Hawaii. In giving permission to publish this poem he said, "Thank you for liking this poem." We do. When asked to write something about himself for another anthology he said, "Let the poems speak for themselves." They do.

### LOCAL SENSIBILITIES

inspired by Frank Chin  
by Wing Tek Lum

When I see a pineapple,  
 I do not think of an exotic fruit sliced in rings  
 to be served with ham,  
 more the summer jobs at the cannery  
 driving a forklift or packing wedges on the line.

When I hear the name "Duke,"  
 I envision someone other than that movie cowboy,  
 gravel-voiced, a true grit idol of the late night set;  
 instead I see a white-haired surfer by his long board,  
 palms so large, flashing smiles along the beach.

When I think of a man-of-war,  
 it is not the name of a Triple Crown horse  
 pacing a stud farm that comes to mind first;  
 rather I picture the Portuguese kind  
 whose stings must be salved by rubbing sand.

When I use the word "packages,"  
 it is usually not a reference to the parcels  
 waiting for me at the post office,  
 rather the paper sacks I get  
 from the supermarket to lug my groceries home.

When I read the term "Jap,"  
 the image of a kamikaze pilot now turned to Sony exports  
 is not what I see;  
 mainly it is the Sand Island roundup and those old men  
 who still wince long after the 442nd has marched back.

When I think of Hawaii,  
 I do not fancy myself lolling under palm trees,  
 a backdrop of verdant cliffs, caressed by a balmy breeze;  
 instead I give thanks for classmates and our family graves,  
 this unique universe that we have called our home.



# Model Dem #3

## Two Women

I am a woman.  
I am a woman.

I am a woman born of a woman whose man owned a factory.

I am a woman born of a woman whose man labored in a factory.

I am a woman whose man wore silk suits, who constantly watched his weight.

I am a woman whose man wore tattered clothing, whose heart was constantly strangled by hunger.

I am a woman who watched two babies grow into beautiful children.

I am a woman who watched two babies die because there was no milk.

I am a woman who watched twins grow into popular college students with summers abroad.

I am a woman who watched three children grow, but with bellies stretched from no food.

But then there was a man;  
But then there was a man.

And he talked about the peasants getting richer by my family getting poorer.

And he told me of days that would be better, and he made the days better.

We had to eat rice.  
We had rice.

We had to eat beans!  
We had beans.

My children were no longer given summer visas to Europe.

My children no longer cried themselves to sleep.

And I felt like a peasant.  
And I felt like a woman.

A peasant with a dull, hard, unexciting life.  
Like a woman with a life that sometimes allowed a song.

And I saw a man.  
And I saw a man.



And together we began to plot with the hope of the return to freedom.  
I saw his heart begin to beat with hope of freedom, at last.

Someday, the return to freedom.  
Someday freedom.

And then,  
But then,

One day,  
One day,

There were planes overhead and guns firing close by.

There were planes overhead and guns firing in the distance.

I gathered my children and went home.  
I gathered my children and ran.

And the guns moved farther and farther away.  
But the guns moved closer and closer.

And then, they announced that freedom had been restored!

And then they came, young boys readily.

They came into my home along with my man.  
They came and found my man.

Those men whose money was almost gone.  
They found all of the men whose lives were almost their own.

And we all had drinks to celebrate.  
And they shot them all.

The most wonderful martinis.  
They shot my man.

And then they asked us to dance.  
And they came for me.

Me.  
For me, the woman.

And my sisters.  
For my sisters.

And then they took us.  
Then they took us.

They took us to dinner at a small, private club.  
They stripped from us the dignity we had gained.

And they treated us to beef.  
And then they raped us.

It was one course after another.  
One after another they came after us.

We nearly burst we were so full.  
Lunging, plunging - sisters bleeding, sisters dying.

It was magnificent to be free again!  
It was hardly a relief to have survived.

The beans have almost disappeared now.  
The beans have disappeared.

The rice - I've replaced it with chicken or steak.  
The rice, I cannot find it.

And the parties continue night after night to make up for all the time wasted.

And my silent tears are joined once more by the midnight cries of my children.

And I feel like a woman again.  
They say, I am a woman.

This was written by a working-class Chilean woman in 1973, shortly after Chile's socialist president, Salvador Allende, was overthrown. A US missionary translated the work and brought it with her when she was forced to leave Chile.