

Excerpts from poems by diverse poets for National Poetry Month
Full works found at <http://www.poets.org/index.php>

"... You're in this dream of cotton plants.
You raise a hoe, swing, and the first weeds
Fall with a sigh. You take another step,
Chop, and the sigh comes again,
Until you yourself are breathing that way
With each step, a sigh that will follow you into town ... "
(Gary Soto, Mexican-American poet, from "A Red Palm")

"The obvious is difficult
To prove. Many prefer
The hidden. I did, too.
I listened to the trees ... "
(Charles Simic, Serbian-American poet, from "The White Room")

" ... As though
the river were
a floor, we position
our table and chairs
upon it, eat, and
have conversation ... "
(Kay Ryan, lesbian poet, from "The Niagara River")

"My black face fades,
hiding inside the black granite.
I said I wouldn't,
dammit: No tears.
I'm stone. I'm flesh ... "
(Yusef Komunyakaa, African-American poet, from "Facing It")

" ... Now that I am grown
and have my own family, do come
for a visit but do not leave
when it is time to go. Sign, do sign
Better go home we and our hands
will make time go suddenly slow."
(John Lee Clark, deaf poet, from "Long Goodbyes"
<http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/excerpts/DAPpoems5.html>)

" ... Skin had hope, that's what skin does.
Heals over the scarred place, makes a road.
Love means you breathe in two countries ... "
(Naomi Shihab Nye, Palestinian-American poet, from "Two Countries")