The rondeau poetry form originated in 14th century France, its name coming from rond, meaning ‘round.’ In its earliest form the rondeau was a courtly song, often passed along by troubadours. Themes included romance, worship and the change of seasons. The form lost popularity in the early 16th century as the sonnet and ballad took precedence, then experienced a revival with the Romantic poets of the 19th century.

**Famous rondeaux poets:**
- Adam de la Halle
- Guillaume de Machault
- Christine de Pisan
- Francis Villon
- Clément Marot
- Epistre Ochamps
- Theodore de Banville
- Jean de la Fontaine
- Maurice Rollinat
- Thomas Wyatt

**Famous rondeaux:***

Rondeau in the Round

Death of Aaron – François Villon

The Last Laugh – A.E. Housman

We Wish You A Merry Christmas – Paul Laurence Dunbar

The False Shepherdess (Shelley)

It is a pleasure to read

Lascivious Love

Did you know?

The rondeau influenced the American blues.

**Retirement of Compulsion**

/ I must – yea, compelled – to write a rondeau
/a I need lines worthy of a troubadour
/b To close forever Sandburg’s open door
/c Or make silvers of Williams’ wheelbarrow

/ It’s harder to write haiku like Basho
/a Sexton could just get a boat and row
/b Pretend to be Frost, go from oar to ear
/c I must – yea, compelled –

**Quintet**

/ I have to make the right lines rhyme now
/a So from them all I’ve had to borrow
/b Can Williams double up and write La Flor?
/c Or run to the corner poetry store
/d Yet still I must make a very good show
/e I must – yea, compelled!

**Quatrain**

**Sestet**

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