

*As I thought about this year's poem, where else to look for inspiration than El Poeta himself, Pablo Neruda, celebrated son of Chile. What follows is an attempt at a Neruda-esque style: indulgent and desperately seeking words that match the artistry and emotion of the moment.*

### **Chile 2019- by Leigh Martin**

Our eyes grow comfortable with their daily routine  
Into retinas the skyline is seared  
Here we land, orient our eyes at the usual spot  
Only to find the sky disappeared

The mountains, engorged, impose their will on our view  
Force our eyes to look up, up higher still  
They envelop the valley--give in to their embrace!  
Then return home to mountains that are now merely hills

You have reset my horizon

But why look up when you can look down?  
To where 33 are cocooned deep underground  
Trapped  
Buried  
Hope and time running out  
Til  
clank  
Clank  
CLANK  
A breakthrough, a rescue  
And the world dreams anew

2019 urges comfort with chaos  
The seer's opening reveal echoes through our retreat  
A growth mindset, applied to a year and a nation  
As an artist tunnels us towards our planet's ticking hot seat

Old power phases out in more ways than one  
Emerging as community-driven, renewable  
As tradition twists and morphs into something new  
Grab hold of what's real, bring vulnerability to the table

But bring your wallet too, there's work left to do  
A goal towards which we've been steadily advancing  
We cross the million dollar mark for Adventures for the Mind  
Hooray! Now it's onto the dancing!

To this oft-forgotten country at the end of the world  
To this constellation of women, infinite potential unfurled

You have reset my horizon

## **St. Louis- by Leigh Martin**

*To the tune of "Meet me in St. Louis."*

*Sincere apologies to Susan Stautberg, Susan Block, and all the other Susans for calling y'all "Susie" so many times in this poem.*

Meet me in St. Louis, Susie,  
Meet me if you dare,  
Don't tell me the Grove is dancing  
Any place but there.  
The Museum of Missouri History,  
Has ne'er seen a sight so sister-y,  
So meet me in St. Louis, Susie,  
I hear the Grove is there!

Meet me in St. Louis, Susie,  
Don your best fash-ion,  
With its world-class zoo and gardens  
It's a leader in conserva-tion.  
Through Ferguson move forward  
Keep bending the arc toward  
Justice in St. Louis, Susie,  
And the whole nation.

Meet me in St. Louis, Susie,  
Then let's talk healthcare,  
Where a doc's new drug pulls women  
Out of post-partum despair.  
Just like Jackie Joyner-Kersey,  
Shows competitors no mercy,  
These glasses from St. Louis, Susie,  
Destroy cancer with a stare.

Meet me in St. Louis, Susie,  
Meet me to de-stress,  
Don't tell me this mini retreat  
Was anything but the best.  
Now it's on to Puerto Rico,  
Where the rum is magnifico,  
But we'll never forget St. Louis, Susie,  
Gateway to the West!