

# Long Paddock

**LECONTE DE LISLE**

La Mort d'un lion

Being an aged hunter thirsting after fresh air  
And the dark blood of oxen, it had been his practice  
To contemplate the plains and the sea from on high,  
Free in his solitude, roaring in peace.

Thus, like one damned who prowls about in hell,  
For the hopeless pleasure of the masses  
He paced back and forth in his iron cell,  
Dashing his rugged head against the two barriers.

This dreadful fate, after all, not about to change,  
He abruptly stopped taking food and drink,  
And death carried off his wayward soul.

O heart, ever prey to rebellion,  
Turning, panting, in the world's cage,  
Coward, why not behave like the lion?

*Translated by John Kinsella*