

# Roots Of Liberty

An American Poem, Abridged



abridged  
A mnemonic for:  
The Bill of Rights  
Amendments 11-27 of the Constitution

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## Prologue: The Sad Tree

The saddest tree once said to me,  
What use are stories if none can read?  
When voices fade and pages burn,  
the past repeats, yet none discern.



## Canto II: The Torch Passed

### *The Bill of Rights*

In the land of the brave, where freedom rings,  
The Bill of Rights protects these things:

First, your voice, your faith, your pen,  
Speak, believe, and gather again.

Second, arms to guard the land,  
A right to bear, a steady hand.

Third, no soldiers in your bed,  
Your home is yours, their stay is shed.

Fourth, your privacy, secure and tight,  
No search or seize without the right.

Fifth, the law protects your say,  
No double trials, no forced betray.

Sixth, a trial, both swift and fair,  
With counsel strong and jurors there.

Seventh, in disputes of civil kind,  
A jury's wisdom you shall find.

Eighth, no punishment cruel or steep,  
Bail and fines within the keep.

Ninth, more rights than words can show,  
For people hold what others don't know.

Tenth, powers not the feds' to wield,  
Belong to states, or the people's shield.

So learn these rights, hold them dear,  
For liberty's light shall persevere.





## Canto III: Balancing the Scales

### *Amendments 11–12*

Eleventh, a state immune to lawsuit stands,  
unless it yields to higher hands.

Twelfth, to choose a leader, votes must pair,  
a president and vice declared.



## Canto IV: Liberty Reborn

### *Amendments 13–27*

Thirteenth, no man shackled, no one sold,  
the chains are broken, free and bold.

Fourteenth, born on this soil, your rights are clear,  
equal laws, no rule of fear.

Fifteenth, race alone won't block the way,  
all men now have the right to say.

Sixteenth, a nation grows, its burdens swell,  
a tax to keep the ledger well.

Seventeenth, no deals, no kings, the choice is mine,  
Senators picked by the people's sign.

Eighteenth, no drink may flow, the law is passed,  
but thirst for change will hold it fast.

Nineteenth, a voice denied no more shall be,  
women claim their right to plea.

Twentieth, the date is set, no time to stall,  
January's oath will lead us all.

Twenty-first, the ban reversed, the barrels flow,  
Prohibition falls below.

Twenty-second, no ruler stays beyond their turn,  
two terms mark the time to learn.

Twenty-third, the silent vote in D.C. heard,  
three voices joined, their rights conferred.

Twenty-fourth, no price to vote, no poll tax due,  
your voice is free, your choice stays true.

Twenty-fifth, if power wanes and leaders fall,  
this line of hands will bear it all.

Twenty-sixth, old enough to serve and fight,  
young shall vote to set things right.

Twenty-seventh, no hasty rise in Congress' pay,  
change must wait for the next array.

## Final Canto: Upon This Parchment

Two hundred rings, four decades more,  
the tree stood tall in years of yore.  
Its roots held fast through flood and flame,  
each scar a mark, each ring a name.

Like those who fell on fields of red,  
my body, too, was torn and bled.  
Yet though my form may turn to dust,  
the words I bear were forged in trust.

Beneath my boughs, with steady hand,  
they signed the dream to guard this land.  
Upon my flesh, the ink ran deep,  
a promise made for us to keep.

Born to this soil with hope unspoiled,  
Not lives once broken, bound, or toiled.  
No heel shall press, no tyrant's shoe,  
For freedom's breath belongs to you.

Franklin spoke with knowing grace:  
*"A Republic—if you can keep its place."*  
*"Those who yield their liberty's light,  
For fleeting safety lose their right."*

Then Madison's creed, both clear and true:  
*"Through knowledge shall men's hope renew."*

And so we turn these pages still,  
through war and peace, through hope and will.  
The rings remain, though bark may fade—  
a testament to what was made.





For liberty is not bestowed,  
but fought, defended, earned, and sown.  
This parchment stands, yet not alone—  
it breathes through us; it is our own.

Let none who perished die in vain,  
Let freedom's spark through storms remain.  
A land where voices shall be free,  
A government of, by, and for thee,  
Let courage rise and prove its worth,  
**We shall not perish from the earth .**