



# Poetry

**Robert Frost (1874–1963)**

***The Road Not Taken***

TWO roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
 And sorry I could not travel both  
 And be one traveler, long I stood  
 And looked down one as far as I could  
 To where it bent in the undergrowth;  
 Then took the other, as just as fair,  
 And having perhaps the better claim,  
 Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
 Though as for that the passing there  
 Had worn them really about the same,  
 And both that morning equally lay  
 In leaves no step had trodden black.  
 Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
 Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
 I doubted if I should ever come back.  
 I shall be telling this with a sigh  
 Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
 Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
 I took the one less traveled by,  
 And that has made all the difference.

**Robert Herrick (1591–1634)**

***To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time***

GATHER ye rose-buds while ye may,  
 Old Time is still a-flying:  
 And this same flower that smiles to-day,  
 To-morrow will be dying.  
 The glorious Lamp of Heaven, the Sun,  
 The higher he's a-getting  
 The sooner will his race be run,  
 And nearer he's to setting.  
 That age is best which is the first,  
 When youth and blood are warmer;  
 But being spent, the worse, and worst  
 Times, still succeed the former.  
 Then be not coy, but use your time;  
 And while ye may, go marry:  
 For having lost but once your prime,  
 You may for ever tarry.

**Walt Whitman (1819–1892). Leaves of Grass. 1900.**

***O Captain! My Captain!***

O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;  
 The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won;  
 The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
 While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:  
 But O heart! heart! heart!  
 O the bleeding drops of red,  
 Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
 Fallen cold and dead.  
 O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
 Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills;  
 For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding;  
 For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;  
 Here Captain! dear father!  
 This arm beneath your head;  
 It is some dream that on the deck,  
 You've fallen cold and dead.  
 My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;  
 My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;  
 The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;  
 From fearful trip, the victor ship, comes in with object won;  
 Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!  
 But I, with mournful tread,  
 Walk the deck my Captain lies,  
 Fallen cold and dead.

*Ulysses - Alfred Tennyson*

It little profits that an idle king,  
 By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
 Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
 Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
 That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.  
 I cannot rest from travel; I will drink  
 Life to the lees. All times I have enjoy'd  
 Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those  
 That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when  
 Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
 Vext the dim sea. I am become a name;  
 For always roaming with a hungry heart  
 Much have I seen and known,— cities of men  
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,  
 Myself not least, but honor'd of them all,—

And drunk delight of battle with my peers,  
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.  
I am a part of all that I have met;  
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'  
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades  
For ever and for ever when I move.  
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!  
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on life  
Were all too little, and of one to me  
Little remains; but every hour is saved  
From that eternal silence, something more,  
A bringer of new things; and vile it were  
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,  
And this gray spirit yearning in desire  
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.  
This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
to whom I leave the sceptre and the isle,--  
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfill  
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild  
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere  
Of common duties, decent not to fail  
In offices of tenderness, and pay  
Meet adoration to my household gods,  
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.  
There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail;  
There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,  
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me,--  
That ever with a frolic welcome took  
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed  
Free hearts, free foreheads,-- you and I are old;  
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.  
Death closes all; but something ere the end,  
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,  
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.  
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;  
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the deep  
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends.

'T is not too late to seek a newer world.  
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.  
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;  
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
 And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.  
 Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'  
 We are not now that strength which in old days  
 Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are, --  
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

### **Shall I Compare Thee To A Summer's Day?**

**William Shakespeare**

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
 Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
 And often is his gold complexion dimmed;  
 And every fair from fair sometimes declines,  
 By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed;  
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;  
 Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:  
 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.



George Gordon Byron, Lord Byron. 1788–1824

*She walks in Beauty*

SHE walks in beauty, like the night  
 Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
 And all that 's best of dark and bright  
 Meet in her aspect and her eyes:  
 Thus mellow'd to that tender light  
 Which heaven to gaudy day denies.  
 One shade the more, one ray the less,  
 Had half impair'd the nameless grace  
 Which waves in every raven tress,  
 Or softly lightens o'er her face;  
 Where thoughts serenely sweet express  
 How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.  
 And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,  
 So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,  
 The smiles that win, the tints that glow,  
 But tell of days in goodness spent,  
 A mind at peace with all below,  
 A heart whose love is innocent!



**JABBERWOCKY**

**Lewis Carroll**

(from *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, 1872)

ˆTwas brillig, and the slithy toves  
 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
 All mimsy were the borogoves,  
 And the mome raths outgrabe.

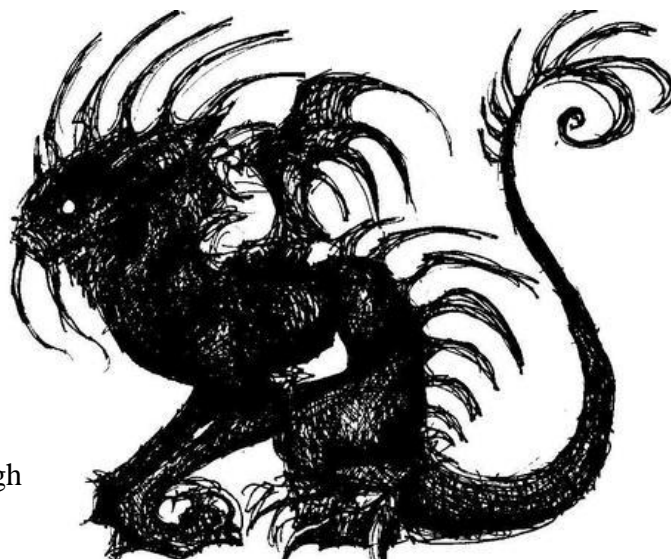
"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
 The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
 Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
 The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:  
 Long time the manxome foe he sought --  
 So rested he by the Tumtum tree,  
 And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,  
 The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,  
 Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,  
 And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through  
 The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!  
 He left it dead, and with its head  
 He went galumphing back.

"And, has thou slain the Jabberwock?  
 Come to my arms, my beamish boy!  
 O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"  
 He chortled in his joy.



`Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
 All mimsy were the borogoves,  
 And the mome raths outgrabe.