

Poetry in *Dead Poets Society*



"We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for."

Dead Poets Society



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.

Walt Whitman



Show me the heart unfettered by foolish dreams
And I'll show you a happy man

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles today,
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.

Robert Herrick



Most men live lives of quiet desperation.

Thoreau



Dare to strike out and find new ground.



from **Song to Myself**

I sound my barbaric YAWP over the rooftops
of the world. . . .

Whitman



But only in their dreams can men be truly free
It was always thus and always thus will be.

Dead Poets Society



O Me! O Life!

O ME O life! . . . of the questions of these recurring:
Of the endless trains of the faithless-- of cities fill'd with the foolish; . . .
What good amid these, O me, O life?

Answer.

That you are here-- that life exists, and identity;
That the powerful play goes on, and you will contribute a verse.

Walt Whitman



from *Walden*

I went to the woods because I wanted to live deliberately,
I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life,
To put to rout all that was not life and not when I had come to die
Discover that I had not lived.

Henry David Thoreau



The Prophet

Teach me to Love? go teach thyself more wit;
I chief Professor am of it....

The God of Love, if such a thing there be,
May learn to love from Me.
He who does boast that he has been
In every Heart since Adam's sin,
I'll lay my Life, nay Mistress on't that's more;
I teach him thing he never knew before;

Abraham Cowley



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 Frost



Sonnet XVIII

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:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed,
And every fair from fair sometime 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.

William Shakespeare



from Ulysses

. . . There lies the port, the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have tol'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 honour 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,
'Tis 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 that 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 heaven and earth; 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.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

from "She Walks In Beauty"

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
All that's best of dark and bright
Melt in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

George Gordon, Lord Byron

from A Midsummer Night's Dream

(Puck)
If we shadows have offended,
Think but this -- and all is mended--
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend;
If you pardon, we will mend.
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to escape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call:
So, good night unto you all,
Give me your hand, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.

William Shakespeare
