**Ozymandias**

BY [PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/percy-bysshe-shelley)

I met a traveller from an antique land,

Who said—“Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,

Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;

And on the pedestal, these words appear:

My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;

Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare

The lone and level sands stretch far away.”

**To Wordsworth**

BY [PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/percy-bysshe-shelley)

Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know

That things depart which never may return:

Childhood and youth, friendship and love’s first glow,

Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.

These common woes I feel. One loss is mine

Which thou too feel’st, yet I alone deplore.

Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine

On some frail bark in winter’s midnight roar:

Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood

Above the blind and battling multitude:

In honoured poverty thy voice did weave

Songs consecrate to truth and liberty,—

Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,

Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.

**“Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art”**

BY [JOHN KEATS](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/john-keats)

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art—    
          Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night    
 And watching, with eternal lids apart,    
          Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,    
 The moving waters at their priestlike task    
          Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,    
 Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask    
          Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—    
 No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,    
          Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,    
 To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,    
          Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,    
 Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,    
 And so live ever—or else swoon to death. 

**Ode on a Grecian Urn**

BY [JOHN KEATS](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/john-keats)

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,

       Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,

Sylvan historian, who canst thus express

       A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:

What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape

       Of deities or mortals, or of both,

               In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?

       What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?

What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?

               What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard

       Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;

Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,

       Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:

Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave

       Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;

               Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,

Though winning near the goal yet, do not grieve;

       She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,

               For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed

         Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;

And, happy melodist, unwearied,

         For ever piping songs for ever new;

More happy love! more happy, happy love!

         For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,

                For ever panting, and for ever young;

All breathing human passion far above,

         That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,

                A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?

         To what green altar, O mysterious priest,

Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,

         And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?

What little town by river or sea shore,

         Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,

                Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?

And, little town, thy streets for evermore

         Will silent be; and not a soul to tell

                Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede

         Of marble men and maidens overwrought,

With forest branches and the trodden weed;

         Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought

As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!

         When old age shall this generation waste,

                Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,

         "Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all

                Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

**When I have Fears That I May Cease to Be**

BY [JOHN KEATS](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/john-keats)

When I have fears that I may cease to be

   Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,

Before high-pilèd books, in charactery,

   Hold like rich garners the full ripened grain;

When I behold, upon the night’s starred face,

   Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,

And think that I may never live to trace

   Their shadows with the magic hand of chance;

And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,

   That I shall never look upon thee more,

Never have relish in the faery power

   Of unreflecting love—then on the shore

Of the wide world I stand alone, and think

Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

**The World Is Too Much With Us**

BY [WILLIAM WORDSWORTH](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/william-wordsworth)

The world is too much with us; late and soon,

Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;—

Little we see in Nature that is ours;

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;

The winds that will be howling at all hours,

And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;

For this, for everything, we are out of tune;

It moves us not. Great God! I’d rather be

A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;

So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,

Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;

Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;

Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

**The Solitary Reaper**

BY [WILLIAM WORDSWORTH](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/william-wordsworth)

Behold her, single in the field,

Yon solitary Highland Lass!

Reaping and singing by herself;

Stop here, or gently pass!

Alone she cuts and binds the grain,

And sings a melancholy strain;

O listen! for the Vale profound

Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt

More welcome notes to weary bands

Of travellers in some shady haunt,

Among Arabian sands:

A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard

In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,

Breaking the silence of the seas

Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—

Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow

For old, unhappy, far-off things,

And battles long ago:

Or is it some more humble lay,

Familiar matter of to-day?

Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,

That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang

As if her song could have no ending;

I saw her singing at her work,

And o'er the sickle bending;—

I listened, motionless and still;

And, as I mounted up the hill,

The music in my heart I bore,

Long after it was heard no more.

**The Tables Turned**

BY [WILLIAM WORDSWORTH](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/william-wordsworth)

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;

Or surely you'll grow double:

Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;

Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun above the mountain's head,

A freshening lustre mellow

Through all the long green fields has spread,

His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:

Come, hear the woodland linnet,

How sweet his music! on my life,

There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!

He, too, is no mean preacher:

Come forth into the light of things,

Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,

Our minds and hearts to bless—

Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,

Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood

May teach you more of man,

Of moral evil and of good,

Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;

Our meddling intellect

Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—

We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;

Close up those barren leaves;

Come forth, and bring with you a heart

That watches and receives.

**The Tyger**

BY [WILLIAM BLAKE](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/william-blake)

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,

In the forests of the night;

What immortal hand or eye,

Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.

Burnt the fire of thine eyes?

On what wings dare he aspire?

What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,

Could twist the sinews of thy heart?

And when thy heart began to beat,

What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,

In what furnace was thy brain?

What the anvil? what dread grasp,

Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears

And water'd heaven with their tears:

Did he smile his work to see?

Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,

In the forests of the night:

What immortal hand or eye,

Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

**The Chimney Sweeper: When my mother died I was very young**

BY WILLIAM BLAKE

When my mother died I was very young,

And my father sold me while yet my tongue

Could scarcely cry " 'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!"

So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head

That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved, so I said,

"Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,

You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet, & that very night,

As Tom was a-sleeping he had such a sight!

That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, & Jack,

Were all of them locked up in coffins of black;

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,

And he opened the coffins & set them all free;

Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,

And wash in a river and shine in the Sun.

Then naked & white, all their bags left behind,

They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind.

And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,

He'd have God for his father & never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark

And got with our bags & our brushes to work.

Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy & warm;

So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

**She Walks in Beauty**

BY [LORD BYRON (GEORGE GORDON)](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/lord-byron)

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 mellowed to that tender light

Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,

Had half impaired 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!