

## POEMS FOR ANALYSIS

### ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

John Keats

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;  
Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:  
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken;  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men  
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

### SONNET 21

William Shakespeare

So is it not with me as with that Muse,  
Stirred by a painted beauty to his verse,  
Who heaven itself for ornament doth use  
And every fair with his fair doth rehearse,  
Making a couplement of proud compare  
With sun and moon, with earth and sea's rich gems,  
With April's first-born flowers, and all things rare,  
That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.  
O! let me, true in love, but truly write,  
And then believe me, my love is as fair  
As any mother's child, though not so bright  
As those gold candles fixed in heaven's air:  
Let them say more that like of hearsay well;  
I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

### SONNET 130

William Shakespeare

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.  
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;  
I grant I never saw a goddess go;  
My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.  
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
As any she belied with false compare.

### STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village, though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

### SONNET TO A NEGRO IN HARLEM

Helene Johnson

You are disdainful and magnificent--  
Your perfect body and your pompous gait,  
Your dark eyes flashing solemnly with hate;  
Small wonder that you are incompetent  
To imitate those whom you so despise--  
Your shoulders towering high above the throng,  
Your head thrown back in rich, barbaric song,  
Palm trees and mangoes stretched before your eyes.  
Let others toil and sweat for labor's sake  
And wring from grasping hands their meed of gold.  
Why urge ahead your supercilious feet?  
Scorn will efface each footprint that you make.  
I love your laughter, arrogant and bold.  
You are too splendid for this city street!

### WHATIF

Shel Silverstein

Last night, while I lay thinking here,  
Some Whatifs crawled inside my ear  
And pranced and partied all night long  
And sang their same old Whatif song:  
Whatif I'm dumb in school?  
Whatif they've closed the swimming pool?  
Whatif I get beat up?  
Whatif there's poison in my cup?  
Whatif I start to cry?

Whatif I get sick and die?  
Whatif I flunk that test?  
Whatif green hair grows on my chest?  
Whatif nobody likes me?  
Whatif a bolt of lightning strikes me?  
Whatif I don't grow talle?  
Whatif my head starts getting smaller?  
Whatif the fish won't bite?  
Whatif the wind tears up my kite?  
Whatif they start a war?  
Whatif my parents get divorced?  
Whatif the bus is late?  
Whatif my teeth don't grow in straight?  
Whatif I tear my pants?  
Whatif I never learn to dance?  
Everything seems well, and then  
The nighttime Whatifs strike again!

### **The Man He Killed**

Thomas Hardy

"Had he and I but met

By some old ancient inn,

We should have sat us down to wet

Right many a nipperkin!

"But ranged as infantry,

And staring face to face,

I shot at him as he at me,

And killed him in his place.

"I shot him dead because —

Because he was my foe,

Just so: my foe of course he was;

That's clear enough; although

"He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,

Off-hand like — just as I —

Was out of work — had sold his traps —

No other reason why.

"Yes; quaint and curious war is!

You shoot a fellow down

You'd treat if met where any bar is,

Or help to half-a-crown."

### **The Face of All the World (Sonnet 7)**

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

The face of all the world is changed, I think,  
Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul  
Move still, oh, still, beside me, as they stole  
Betwixt me and the dreadful outer brink  
Of obvious death, where I, who thought to sink,  
Was caught up into love, and taught the whole  
Of life in a new rhythm. The cup of dole

God gave for baptism, I am fain to drink,  
And praise its sweetness, Sweet, with thee anear.  
The names of country, heaven, are changed away  
For where thou art or shalt be, there or here;  
And this... this lute and song... loved yesterday,  
(The singing angels know) are only dear,  
Because thy name moves right in what they say.