

# Irony in Poetry Examples

1. **"Richard Cory" by Edwin Arlington Robinson** - Wealth doesn't equate to happiness, as the seemingly perfect Richard Cory takes his own life.
2. **"Ozymandias" by Percy Bysshe Shelley** - The "king of kings" has a statue in ruins, ironically showing the impermanence of power.
3. **"This Is Just To Say" by William Carlos Williams** - The narrator apologizes for eating the plums someone else was saving, but the irony is that he doesn't really seem sorry.
4. **"The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost** - The irony lies in the narrator stating the road less traveled "made all the difference," but both roads were actually similarly traveled.
5. **"Mending Wall" by Robert Frost** - The speaker ironically insists that "Good fences make good neighbors," despite questioning the need for the wall.
6. **"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost** - The beauty of the woods is tempting, but the irony lies in the societal obligations that pull the speaker away.
7. **"Dulce et Decorum Est" by Wilfred Owen** - The phrase "It is sweet and honorable to die for one's country" becomes ironic as the poem reveals the horrors of war.
8. **"Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" by Dylan Thomas** - The irony is in urging the dying to "burn and rave," contrasting the conventional idea of going peacefully.
9. **"Because I could not stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson** - Death is personified as a polite suitor, ironically contrasting the traditional notion of death as grim.

10. **"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T.S. Eliot** - Prufrock ironically fears judgment for his inadequacies but judges himself more harshly than anyone else would.
11. **"Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes** - The irony is that life hasn't been a 'crystal stair' for the mother, yet her experiences make her advice invaluable.
12. **"If—" by Rudyard Kipling** - The poem outlines virtues for success but ends with the ironic "you'll be a Man, my son," suggesting the unattainable ideal of manhood.
13. **"To His Coy Mistress" by Andrew Marvell** - Irony exists in the exaggerated romantic promises, only to stress that time is running out.
14. **"Phenomenal Woman" by Maya Angelou** - The irony lies in society's traditional ideals of beauty being subverted by the speaker's self-assured confidence.
15. **"Annabel Lee" by Edgar Allan Poe** - The irony that the "angels" are jealous of the lovers subverts the usual positive depiction of angels.
16. **"Harlem" by Langston Hughes** - The poem asks what happens to a dream deferred, with the irony being that the reality is often harsh and unpoetic.
17. **"The Waste Land" by T.S. Eliot** - Ironically, the title's "waste land" is not just physical but emotional and spiritual, reflecting the disillusionment of the era.
18. **"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" by William Wordsworth** - The speaker ironically finds company in solitude through the vision of daffodils.
19. **"Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost** - The irony lies in the debate between which is worse, fire or ice, while both are equally destructive.
20. **"Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll** - Ironically, the nonsense words in the poem create a coherent story, despite their individual lack of meaning.
21. **"Lady Lazarus" by Sylvia Plath** - The irony here is that each 'resurrection' leaves the protagonist feeling less alive, contrasting the usual implications of rebirth.
22. **"Song of Myself" by Walt Whitman** - The irony is that while celebrating individuality, Whitman also acknowledges the collective soul of humanity.

23. **"Sonnet 18" by William Shakespeare** - The irony lies in trying to immortalize the subject's beauty through poetry, a form that itself is subject to time and interpretation.
24. **"Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou** - The irony is that society's attempts to oppress the speaker only make her stronger and more determined to rise.
25. **"A Poison Tree" by William Blake** - The narrator ironically nurtures a tree of anger that bears a deadly fruit, suggesting the destructive power of repressed emotion.
26. **"The Chimney Sweeper" by William Blake** - The irony is that the purity of the children is juxtaposed with the dark, dangerous job they are forced to do.
27. **"Sonnet 130" by William Shakespeare** - Shakespeare ironically dismantles traditional love poem clichés by stating his love's lack of conformity to them, yet still affirming his love.
28. **"Howl" by Allen Ginsberg** - The irony is in the contrast between the cultural ideals of the time and the disillusionment experienced by the 'best minds' of Ginsberg's generation.
29. **"A Dream Within a Dream" by Edgar Allan Poe** - The irony is that the speaker questions reality in a dream, making it doubly uncertain.
30. **"The Tyger" by William Blake** - The irony lies in questioning how the same creator could make both the innocent lamb and the ferocious tiger.
31. **"The Hollow Men" by T.S. Eliot** - The irony is that the hollow men are paralyzed by their emptiness, unable to fully exist or pass on.
32. **"To a Mouse" by Robert Burns** - The irony is that while the mouse's home is destroyed, it can still build anew, unlike the speaker, weighed down by past and future concerns.
33. **"A Visit from St. Nicholas" by Clement Clarke Moore** - The irony is that the night before Christmas, usually a time of anticipation, becomes a night of surprising revelations.
34. **"Kubla Khan" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge** - The irony is that the ideal paradise in the poem is an opium-induced illusion, questioning the nature of creativity.

35. **"The Charge of the Light Brigade" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson** - The irony is that the disastrous charge is both tragic and noble, leaving readers conflicted in their sentiments.
36. **"One Art" by Elizabeth Bishop** - The irony is that the speaker claims that loss is an art easily mastered, while clearly struggling with loss throughout the poem.
37. **"The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus** - The irony lies in the contrast between the old Colossus representing imperial might and the new one symbolizing freedom and refuge.
38. **"Sea Fever" by John Masefield** - The irony is that the sea is both a source of desire and danger, portraying the complexities of longing.
39. **"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge** - The irony is that the mariner's punishment for a single act of rashness is eternal, outlasting even the journey itself.
40. **"The Cremation of Sam McGee" by Robert W. Service** - The irony is that Sam finds the warmth he longed for only in death, through cremation.
41. **"Phenomenal Woman" by Maya Angelou** - The irony lies in the speaker's rejection of traditional beauty norms, yet she still feels phenomenal and attracts attention.
42. **"The Flea" by John Donne** - The irony is that the speaker uses a flea, a symbol of annoyance, as an elaborate metaphor to argue for a union between lovers.
43. **"Ozymandias" by Percy Bysshe Shelley** - The irony comes from the decaying statue in the desert, contrasting sharply with the inscription claiming eternal power.
44. **"Invictus" by William Ernest Henley** - The irony is in the speaker's claim to be the master of fate, while the very title of the poem suggests something that cannot be conquered.
45. **"The Waste Land" by T.S. Eliot** - The irony lies in the contrast between the poem's grand title and its fragmented, disillusioned content.
46. **"Harlem" by Langston Hughes** - The irony is that the 'dream deferred' becomes explosive, countering the initial passive idea of deferral.

47. **"Because I could not stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson** - The irony is that Death is portrayed as a polite suitor, against its usual fearful representation.
48. **"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T.S. Eliot** - The irony is that it's a love song without any love, just indecision and existential angst.
49. **"The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost** - The irony lies in glorifying the road 'less traveled by,' while acknowledging that both paths were 'really about the same.'
50. **"To His Coy Mistress" by Andrew Marvell** - The irony is in the juxtaposition of romantic persuasion with the grim reality of time's passage.
51. **"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost** - The irony is that the serenity of the woods is both inviting and ominous, symbolizing both peace and death.
52. **"Annabel Lee" by Edgar Allan Poe** - The irony is that the love which was too strong for the angels to tolerate continues even after Annabel Lee's death.
53. **"Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" by Dylan Thomas** - The irony is in urging resistance against 'the dying of the light,' which is an inevitable process.
54. **"Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost** - The irony lies in the trivialization of the world's end, comparing it to emotional experiences of desire and hatred.
55. **"My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning** - The irony is in the Duke's attempts to control his late wife's image even after her death, revealing his own flaws instead.
56. **"The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe** - The irony is that the speaker seeks comfort about his lost love, but is tormented further by the raven's repetitive 'Nevermore.'
57. **"A Modest Proposal" by Jonathan Swift** - The irony lies in the outrageous proposition to eat children as a solution to poverty, highlighting society's indifference to the suffering of the poor.

58. **"Dulce et Decorum Est" by Wilfred Owen** - The irony is in the title, which translates to 'it is sweet and proper,' contrasting the horrific realities of war described in the poem.
59. **"Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave?" by Thomas Hardy** - The irony is that the one digging on the grave is neither friend nor family, but a dog burying a bone.
60. **"Mending Wall" by Robert Frost** - The irony is in the statement 'Good fences make good neighbors,' questioning the actual need for barriers.
61. **"The Chimney Sweeper" by William Blake** - The irony is in the innocent hope for a better afterlife, contrasting the grim reality of child labor.
62. **"The Hollow Men" by T.S. Eliot** - The irony lies in the phrase "This is the way the world ends, Not with a bang but a whimper," suggesting that the end is neither grand nor dramatic but rather insignificant.
63. **"Caged Bird" by Maya Angelou** - The irony is that the caged bird sings of freedom, despite its own confinement.
64. **"The Tyger" by William Blake** - The irony lies in questioning how the same creator could make both the lamb and the fearsome tiger.
65. **"Digging" by Seamus Heaney** - The irony is in the contrast between the speaker's pen and his father's spade, yet both are tools for digging into their heritage.
66. **"Ode to a Nightingale" by John Keats** - The irony lies in the speaker's desire to escape reality through the nightingale's song, only to be pulled back into the world of suffering.
67. **"In Memoriam A.H.H." by Alfred Lord Tennyson** - The irony is in the juxtaposition of personal grief with the cosmic indifference of nature.
68. **"A Poison Tree" by William Blake** - The irony lies in the destructive outcome of repressed anger, hidden beneath the facade of a smiling face.
69. **"Lady Lazarus" by Sylvia Plath** - The irony is in the speaker's rebirth after each attempt to die, turning death into a form of art.

70. **"Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" by Wallace Stevens** - The irony is that each viewpoint offers a new understanding, yet the essence of the blackbird remains elusive.
71. **"Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats** - The irony lies in the urn's eternal beauty, which is both a blessing and a curse, as it remains static and unchanging.
72. **"The Red Wheelbarrow" by William Carlos Williams** - The irony is that so much depends upon a simple, seemingly insignificant red wheelbarrow.
73. **"Acquainted with the Night" by Robert Frost** - The irony is that the speaker is acquainted with the night, a symbol of loneliness, but is still isolated from human connection.
74. **"Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden** - The irony lies in the speaker's late realization of the father's love, expressed through thankless tasks.
75. **"The Second Coming" by W.B. Yeats** - The irony is in the notion of a second coming, but instead of salvation, it brings about a chaotic and terrifying change.
76. **"Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep" by Mary Elizabeth Frye** - The irony is that the deceased speaker insists they are not confined to their grave, offering comfort to the grieving.
77. **"The Fish" by Elizabeth Bishop** - The irony lies in the speaker's decision to release the fish after acknowledging its struggle for survival, contrasting the typical notion of victory in fishing.
78. **"This Be The Verse" by Philip Larkin** - The irony is that the speaker blames his parents for his miseries, yet the cycle is likely to continue with future generations.
79. **"A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" by John Donne** - The irony lies in forbidding mourning during a farewell, suggesting that physical distance cannot sever emotional connection.
80. **"Funeral Blues" by W.H. Auden** - The irony is in the absurdity of the speaker's requests to stop all the clocks and disconnect the telephone, capturing the irrationality of grief.
81. **"The Waste Land" by T.S. Eliot** - The irony lies in the fragmented narratives that speak to a disillusioned post-war world, offering no resolution.

82. **"The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost** - The irony is in the speaker's claim that choosing the less traveled road "made all the difference," when both roads were actually equally traveled.
83. **"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T.S. Eliot** - The irony is that it is not a love song at all, but a lament of indecisiveness and existential dread.
84. **"She Walks in Beauty" by Lord Byron** - The irony is in contrasting the woman's beauty with the dark night, suggesting that beauty can exist in unexpected places.
85. **"Sonnet 130" by William Shakespeare** - The irony lies in the anti-Petrarchan stance, undercutting idealized notions of love and beauty.
86. **"Annabel Lee" by Edgar Allan Poe** - The irony is that love, which is usually life-affirming, becomes an obsession leading to eternal mourning.
87. **"The Flea" by John Donne** - The irony lies in using a flea as a metaphor for sacred union, subverting expectations about romantic poetry.
88. **"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge** - The irony is in the Mariner's punishment: he survives to retell his tale but is isolated by his guilt.
89. **"Sonnet 18" by William Shakespeare** - The irony is that the speaker immortalizes the beloved in the sonnet, despite discussing the impermanence of life and beauty.
90. **"A Visit from St. Nicholas" by Clement Clarke Moore** - The irony lies in the magical and peaceful depiction of St. Nicholas, contrasting the actual stressful nature of the holiday season.
91. **"Howl" by Allen Ginsberg** - The irony is that the marginalized figures in the poem are portrayed as the true visionaries, challenging societal norms.
92. **"The Rape of the Lock" by Alexander Pope** - The irony lies in elevating a trivial event into an epic battle, mocking societal vanities.
93. **"My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning** - The irony is that the Duke reveals his own flaws while trying to belittle his deceased wife.
94. **"Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll** - The irony lies in making sense out of nonsense, pushing the boundaries of language and meaning.



95. **"Because I could not stop for Death" by Emily Dickinson** - The irony is in the courteous portrayal of Death, contrary to its feared image.
96. **"The Charge of the Light Brigade" by Alfred Lord Tennyson** - The irony is that the soldiers' heroism is celebrated, despite the blunder that led them to their deaths.
97. **"Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost** - The irony lies in the allure of the woods representing both beauty and danger, and the speaker must resist to fulfill duties.
98. **"A Modest Proposal" by Jonathan Swift (Though not a poem, often analyzed for irony)** - The irony is in the proposal itself, which suggests solving poverty by eating babies, thereby criticizing the lack of real solutions.
99. **"Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost** - The irony is in the casual debate on how the world will end, as if either option is acceptable.
100. **"Ozymandias" by Percy Bysshe Shelley** - The irony lies in the inscription "Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!" when all that remains are ruins, mocking the transience of power.