

William Shakespeare, SONNET 18

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 dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

Sonnet XLIII

By Edna St Vincent Millay, 1923

What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why,
I have forgotten, and what arms have lain
Under my head till morning; but the rain
Is full of ghosts tonight, that tap and sigh
Upon the glass and listen for reply,
And in my heart there stirs a quiet pain
For unremembered lads that not again
Will turn to me at midnight with a cry.
Thus in winter stands the lonely tree,
Nor knows what birds have vanished one by one,
Yet knows its boughs more silent than before:
I cannot say what loves have come and gone,
I only know that summer sang in me
A little while, that in me sings no more.

**Composed Upon Westminster Bridge,
September 3, 1802
William Wordsworth**

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

-- [William Wordsworth](#)

Sonnet at Journey's End

Shall I compare thee to a ticket collector?

Thou art more lovely and more even tempered

('T would not be hard!)

Rough hands do take the darling tickets of May

And one's yearly Season hath all to short a date.

Sometimes my photocard is checked

Other times I am waved through at the gate:

This inconsistency doth leave me perplex'd

But 'tis not the traveller's place to question why,

For I know that at my journey's end –

(Despite snow that doth have some error and

Leaves that lieth where they shouldst not) –

I shall find thee waiting by our fire's grate,

And thy eternal summer shall never fade

Even though Knapp's boys often make me late.

'Straphanger', *Poems not on the Underground*

Composed upon Oxford Street

Earth has plenty to show more fair:

Dull would he be of soul who could enjoy

Sights so grating in their commerciality:

This Street now doth, like an old rag, defile

The beauty of the morning; noisy, full,

Shops, department stores, burger bars and boutiques lie

Open unto the pavement, and to the sky;

All tacky and glittering in the fume-filled air.

Often did sun more beautifully bless

In his first splendour valley, rock or hill;

Ne'er saw I, and felt, a cacophony so deep!

The buses do charge at their own sweet will:

Dear God! The very pigeons seem tawdry and cheep;

And beneath the Street Londoners on the Central feel ill!

'Straphanger', *Poems not on the Underground*

Tube Sonnet

What seats my trousers have kissed, and where, and shy,

I have forgotten, and what arm rests have lain

Under my elbow till Holborn; but the tunnel

Is full of ghosts tonight, that tap and sigh

Upon the glass and listen for reply.

What shall I tell them as we rattle along,

Through Bank and Chancery and Tottenham Court?

That the journey is tiresome more often than not?

That the commuter's lot is a sorry one, not worth a jot?

No, I shall tell them the rails sing with joy,

That the air is like wine and the staff deserve a clap.

Then I'll point to my head and say 'Mind the gap'.

'Straphanger', *Poems not on the Underground*