

“When I Was One-and-Twenty”

By A. E. Housman

When I was one-and-twenty

I heard a wise man say,

“Give crowns and pounds and guineas

But not your heart away;

5 Give pearls away and rubies

But keep your fancy free.”

But I was one-and-twenty,

No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty

10 I heard him say again,

“The heart out of the bosom

Was never given in vain;

'Tis paid with sighs a plenty

And sold for endless rue.”

15 And I am two-and-twenty,

And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

“My Papa’s Waltz”

By Theodore Roethke

The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy dizzy;
But I hung on like death:
Such waltzing was not easy.

5 We romped until the pans
Slid from the kitchen shelf;
My mother’s countenance
Could not unfrown itself.

The hand that held my wrist
10 Was battered on one knuckle;
At every step you missed
My right ear scraped a buckle.

You beat time on my head
With a palm caked hard by dirt,
15 Then waltzed me off to bed
Still clinging to your shirt.

Directions: After reading, annotating, and analyzing the poems, answer the following questions **on a separate piece of paper**. Be clear and do your best with the annotations. It will help you answer the questions.

“When I Was One-and-Twenty” Questions

1. Who is the speaker in the poem? Describe this person. You do not need a physical description, but point out some things you know about him/her.
2. A) In the first stanza, what advice does the “wise man” (line 2) give the speaker? B) Why do you think the speaker is given this advice?
3. Why is the wise man’s advice lost on the speaker? Explain the answer given in the poem.
4. A) How does the speaker react to the wise man’s advice in the second stanza? B) What has changed? Explain the answer.

“My Papa’s Waltz” Questions

1. A) Who is the speaker of the poem? Describe the person using specific details from the poem. B) Who is the other character? Using details from the poem, describe this person.
2. This is a narrative poem; it tells a story. A) What is happening in the poem? B) How does the speaker **feel** about what is happening? Use specific details from the poem to support your answer.
3. When people first read this poem, they often think that the speaker is in danger or that he is being hurt. A) What details might give someone this impression? B) After studying the poem, do you think this is true?
4. Do you believe this poem is “happy,” not happy, or something else? In other words, what is **your** impression or feeling about the poem? Explain your answer **FULLY** using specific details from the poem.