

A. E. Housman

Quotes

*Men, Lying, Heart, Thinking, Drinking, Beer, Way, World, Love, Morning, Land,
Moon, Spring, Heaven, Humorous, Poetry, Book, Sleep, Wind, Life*

And malt does more than Milton can to justify God's ways to man.

~A. E. Housman

Great literature should do some good to the reader: must quicken his perception though dull, and sharpen his discrimination though blunt, and mellow the rawness of his personal opinions.

~A. E. Housman

That is the land of lost content, I see it shining plain, the happy highways where I went and cannot come again.

~A. E. Housman

They put arsenic in his meat And stared aghast to watch him eat; They poured strychnine in his cup And shook to see him drink it up.

~A. E. Housman

Now, of my threescore years and ten, Twenty will not come again.

~A. E. Housman

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now Is hung with bloom along the bough.

~A. E. Housman

On Wenlock Edge the wood's in trouble; His forest fleece the Wrekin heaves; The wind it plies the saplings double, And thick on Severn snow the leaves.

~A. E. Housman

All knowledge is precious whether or not it serves the slightest human use.

~A. E. Housman

The house of delusions is cheap to build but drafty to live in.

~A. E. Housman

Oh I have been to Ludlow fair, and left my necktie God knows where.
And carried half way home, or near, pints and quarts of Ludlow beer.

~A. E. Housman

I find Cambridge an asylum, in every sense of the word.

~A. E. Housman

In every American there is an air of incorrigible innocence, which
seems to conceal a diabolical cunning.

~A. E. Housman

Three minutes thought would suffice to find this out; but thought is
irksome and three minutes is a long time.

~A. E. Housman

Life, to be sure, is nothing much to lose, But young men think it is, and
we were young.

~A. E. Housman

With rue my heart is laden For golden friends I had, For many a
rose-lipped maiden And many a lightfoot lad.

~A. E. Housman

I do not choose the right word, I get rid of the wrong one.

~A. E. Housman

Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink for fellows whom it hurts to think.

~A. E. Housman

The bells they sound on Bredon, And still the steeples hum. "Come all
to church, good people"- Oh, noisy bells, be dumb; I hear you, I will
come.

~A. E. Housman

A moment's thought would have shown him. But a moment is a long time, and thought is a painful process.

~A. E. Housman

Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink your ale.

~A. E. Housman

Experience has taught me, when I am shaving of a morning, to keep watch over my thoughts, because, if a line of poetry strays into my memory, my skin bristles so that the razor ceases to act.

~A. E. Housman

Give me a land of boughs in leaf
A land of trees that stand;
Where trees are fallen there is grief;
I love no leafless land.

~A. E. Housman

Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies,
But keep your fancy free.

~A. E. Housman

And how am I to face the odds
Of man's bedevilment and God's?
I, a stranger and afraid
In a world I never made.

~A. E. Housman

The average man, if he meddles with criticism at all, is a conservative critic.

~A. E. Housman

Tell me not here, it needs not saying,
What tune the enchantress plays
In aftermaths of soft September
Or under blanching mays,
For she and I were long acquainted
And I knew all her ways.

~A. E. Housman

Who made the world I cannot tell;
'Tis made, and here am I in hell. My

hand, though now my knuckles bleed, I never soiled with such a deed.

~A. E. Housman

I, a stranger and afraid, in a world I never made.

~A. E. Housman

Nature, not content with denying him the ability to think, has endowed him with the ability to write.

~A. E. Housman

Ten thousand times I've done my best and all's to do again.

~A. E. Housman

There, by the starlit fences
The wanderer halts and hears
My soul that lingers sighing
About the glimmering weirs.

~A. E. Housman

The troubles of our proud and angry dust are from eternity, and shall not fail. Bear them we can, and if we can we must. Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink your ale.

~A. E. Housman

Good religious poetry... is likely to be most justly appreciated and most discriminately relished by the undevout.

~A. E. Housman

Clay lies still, but blood's a rover;
Breath's aware that will not keep. Up,
lad: when the journey's over then there'll be time enough to sleep.

~A. E. Housman

To justify God's ways to man.

~A. E. Housman

I could no more define poetry than a terrier can define a rat.

~A. E. Housman

Here dead lie we because we did not choose to live and shame the land from which we sprung. Life, to be sure, is nothing much to lose; but young men think it is, and we were young.

~A. E. Housman

They carry back bright to the coiner the mintage of man, The lads that will die in their glory and never be old.

~A. E. Housman

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking Spins the heavy world around.

~A. E. Housman

Even when poetry has a meaning, as it usually has, it may be inadvisable to draw it out. Perfect understanding will sometimes almost extinguish pleasure.

~A. E. Housman

And silence sounds no worse than cheers After earth has stopped the ears.

~A. E. Housman

The laws of God, the laws of man, He may keep that will and can; Not I: let God and man decree Laws for themselves and not for me.

~A. E. Housman

The fairies break their dances And leave the printed lawn.

~A. E. Housman

White in the moon the long road lies.

~A. E. Housman

When the journey's over/There'll be time enough to sleep.

~A. E. Housman

The rainy Pleiads wester Orion plunges prone, And midnight strikes
and hastens, And I lie down alone.

~A. E. Housman

They say my verse is sad: no wonder; Its narrow measure spans Tears
of eternity, and sorrow, Not mine. but man's.

~A. E. Housman

Hope lies to mortals And most believe her, But man's deceiver Was
never mine.

~A. E. Housman

Therefore, since the world has still Much good, but much less good
than ill

~A. E. Housman

All knots that lovers tie Are tied to sever. Here shall your sweetheart lie,
Untrue for ever.

~A. E. Housman

Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure.

~A. E. Housman

The mortal sickness of a mind too unhappy to be kind.

~A. E. Housman

We now to peace and darkness And earth and thee restore Thy
creature that thou madest And wilt cast forth no more.

~A. E. Housman

Lovers lying two and two Ask not whom they sleep beside, And the
bridegroom all night through Never turns him to the bride.

~A. E. Housman

Poetry is not the thing said, but the way of saying it.

~A. E. Housman

I think that to transfuse emotion - not to transmit thought but to set up in the reader's sense a vibration corresponding to what was felt by the writer - is the peculiar function of poetry.

~A. E. Housman

Do not ever read books about versification: no poet ever learnt it that way. If you are going to be a poet, it will come to you naturally and you will pick up all you need from reading poetry.

~A. E. Housman

Now hollow fires burn out to black, And lights are guttering low: Square your shoulders, lift your pack And leave your friends and go.

~A. E. Housman

But men at whiles are sober And think by fits and starts. And if they think, they fasten Their hands upon their hearts

~A. E. Housman

His folly has not fellow Beneath the blue of day That gives to man or woman His heart and soul away.

~A. E. Housman

Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour, He stood and counted them and cursed his luck; And then the clock collected in the tower Its strength, and struck.

~A. E. Housman

There, like the wind through woods in riot, Through him the gale of life blew high; The tree of man was never quiet: Then 'twas the Roman,

now 'tis I.

~A. E. Housman

This is for all ill-treated fellows Unborn and unbegot, For them to read when they're in trouble And I am not.

~A. E. Housman

Tomorrow, more's the pity, Away we both must hie, To air the ditty and to earth I.

~A. E. Housman

Stone, steel, dominions pass, Faith too, no wonder; So leave alone the grass That I am under.

~A. E. Housman

But if you ever come to a road where danger; Or guilt or anguish or shame's to share. Be good to the lad who loves you true, And the soul that was born to die for you; And whistle and I'll be there.

~A. E. Housman

He would not stay for me, and who can wonder? He would not stay for me to stand and gaze. I shook his hand, and tore my heart in sunder, And went with half my life about my ways.

~A. E. Housman

Some men are more interesting than their books but my book is more interesting than its man.

~A. E. Housman

Earth and high heaven are fixed of old and founded strong.

~A. E. Housman

June suns, you cannot store them To warm the winter's cold, The lad that hopes for heaven Shall fill his mouth with mould.

~A. E. Housman

The thoughts of others Were light and fleeting, Of lovers' meeting Or luck or fame. Mine were of trouble, And mine were steady; So I was ready When trouble came.

~A. E. Housman

Look not in my eyes, for fear They mirror true the sight I see, And there you find your face too clear And love it and be lost like me.

~A. E. Housman

Related Links:

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