



## Robert Browning's Poetry

*Robert Browning , James F. Loucks (Editor) , Andrew M. Stauffer (Editor)*

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The poems are ordered chronologically according to their first appearance in book form. Thirteen new poems are included in this edition, with *Pauline* now printed in its entirety. Annotations have been revised throughout to clarify Browning's references and vocabulary. "Criticism" retains the important contextual perspective of the First Edition. The twenty-three essays, nine of which are new, are divided into three sections: "Victorian Views," "Modern Essays in Criticism," and "Interpretations of Poems."

A Chronology, Selected Bibliography, and Index of Titles and First Lines are also included.

## Robert Browning's Poetry Details

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# From Reader Review Robert Browning's Poetry for online ebook

## Lynda says

I first read Browning as a teenager because I had read Barretts of Wimpole Street. I really enjoyed his works and as the years went on, I enjoyed them more profoundly.

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## Lady Dixie says

I often envision Elizabeth Barrett Browning saying to her husband, "You know, Bob, I love your poetry, but all these dukes having their wives bumped off and spurned lovers strangling women with their own hair are creeping me out. And all those obscure literary allusions -- I mean really, give me something I can use." EBB was more popular than her husband during their lifetimes.

What I love about Robert Browning is his willingness to examine the more seamy side of life and to unapologetically portray villainous speakers. He's a standout among his fellow Victorians because of his beautiful mastery of the dramatic monologue.

Check out "My Last Duchess," "Porphyria's Lover," "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," and "The Bishop Orders His Tomb at St. Praxad's." Be sure to read them aloud -- they're meant to be heard.

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## Kajah says

I love Browning. After reading Byatt's *Possession* I took up his poetry and have been delighted by them ever since. He seems to channel other time periods and people in enchanting ways and skimming around his complete works offers up so many pleasantly variegated sensations. The one I read the most is probably "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came", which for the present seems ungraspable, urgent, and hauntingly desperate in it's tone. I have the feeling Browning is going to be a worthy escape in times of trouble and boredom.

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## Hannah says

Absolutely loved this book . Browning's use of multiple pov and multiple verses means there are multiple versions of the same story and that's just genius .For me Browning remains the ultimate truth and this book captures the essence of this brilliance .

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## Carol says

I haven't read all the poems.

I enjoyed the shorter ones, and some of the longer ones, but I generally have a hard time sticking with a poem that goes on for several pages.

A few poems were familiar from college freshman English class.

By the way this book was a Christmas gift.

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## **Casey says**

Robert Browning is certainly a man of intellect and genius. However, reading his poetry is difficult. Not simply from the obscurity of the subject matter, but his writing is dense and at times inarticulate.

The dramatic monologues are the best. The characterizations are really wonderful, and he creates diverse, complicated plots. Browning is a lover of Italy, the Renaissance, and the Greeks. It's hard to believe he was an Englishman, as his subject matter really takes the reader to another place.

He can be so challenging to read that it can be hard to appreciate his poetry. He doesn't really write beautiful, elegant phrases, yet there is a rhythm to his poetry that evinces the subject matter well. Most of the subject matter are of historical figures, real or imagined. Few romance or nature poems here, which I suppose sets Browning apart from typical poetry.

My favorites: My Last Duchess, Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came, Bishop Blougram's Apology.

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## **Jake says**

I read him in high school and in college, and while I read only a smattering of his work, two of his poems alone deserve a four star rating. "Porphyria's Lover" and "My Last Duchess" are both chilling examples of men gone mad.

PL, a disturbing study in psychotic love and necrophilia, has a rhyme and meter that makes the topic all the more unnerving in its simplistic delivery. Browning is a genius in terms of how he unmask's his speaker's madness.

MLD, a stunning look at arrogance and power shifts, dissects a Duke who casually discusses the disappearance of his first wife with a friend as he strolls through his collection of art. The writing here is absolutely first rate, with lines such as "She had a heart – how shall I say? – too soon made glad..." and "I gave commands; then all smiles stopped together" making my head race with envy of his writing. The sharp reader will deduce that his jealousy of her philandering ways made him have her killed or locked up in a convent, but the way Browning leads you to this questionable conclusion is beautiful.

If you don't know poetry, at least put some Browning into your early attempts at true knowledge. He is, simply, that good.

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## **Amanda says**

I took a seminar at Davidson on Robert Browning- before this class I really had only read "My Last Duchess" and didn't know much about him. I now consider him one of my favorite poets (and I really only have two) and it's because of his use of the dramatic monologue which makes his poetry read like narrative prose, even when it has a regular metre and rhyme scheme. His poems take on specific characters and tell stories and frequently his characters are cynical or unsavory. Genius and delightful to read.

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## **Ben says**

As a poet, I admire Browning's structure more than the content of his work. His work does not move me in the way that others do, like Blake, Ferlinghetti, Poe, or Ginsberg. His works are certainly reflective of the Victorian Era in which he was writing. My favorite of all the works contained in this collection was "The Statue and the Bust."

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## **Laurie says**

Time to re-read and re-assess

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## **Lise says**

Classic British 19th century poetry.

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## **Kelly says**

### ***One Way of Love***

*All June I bound the rose in sheaves.  
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves  
And strew them where Pauline may pass.  
She will not turn aside? Alas!  
Let them lie. Suppose they die?  
The chance was they might take her eye.*

### ***II.***

*How many a month I strove to suit  
These stubborn fingers to the lute!  
To-day I venture all I know.  
She will not hear my music? So!  
Break the string; fold music's wing:*

*Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!*

### III.

*My whole life long I learned to love.  
This hour my utmost art I prove  
And speak my passion---heaven or hell?  
She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!  
Lose who may---I still can say,  
Those who win heaven, blest are they!*

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### Maureen says

I said in an earlier review that I like Browning's wife sonnets better. But that was a book leading off with *The Last Duchess*. Now that I think about it, a book of Browning poetry is not a bad companion on a lazy afternoon.

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### Tony says

Browning, Robert. *DRAMATIC MONOLOGUES*. (This ed. 1991). \*\*\*\*. There are a lot of old friends in this collection of Browning's works. These include "My Last Duchess," "Love Among the Ruins," "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," and "Rabbi Ben Ezra." Add to these the rest of the monologues and an introduction by A. S. Byatt, and you have a comfortable evening of reading. Find a quiet place, since these poems are best read aloud. You don't want too many people giving you funny looks. All of these poems, though, aren't great. Some simply don't work at all. Others are too shrouded in Browning's classical knowledge and references – in spite of the full compliment of footnotes provided by Ms. Byatt. It is obvious that the poet is one of Byatt's favorites. Quoting Byatt: "He is one of the very greatest English poets, and his greatness has never been fully acknowledged or described, in part because his prolific writing and his great and idiosyncratic erudition make him hard to come to terms with all at once, in part because he is difficult to docket in terms of the usual literary discussions of Victorian poetry. He is, in my view, one of the three great English love poets (the other two are Donne and Robert Graves) because, like them, he shows a precise curiosity about the psychological dramas of love's shifts, visions and failures, and also because, again like them, he sees women as complex human beings, with their own minds and desires, and hopes for dialog." One poem that I had not read before was "Mister Sludge, 'The Medium'." This turns out to be a multi-paged screed against spiritualism, a phenomenon that was running rampant at the time, and was also strongly believed in by Elizabeth Barrett. Recommended.

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### John Bills says

Robert Browning's *Poetry* contains a full range of Browning's poetic works from periods of his career demarcated in the collection with section headings: "The Experimental Phase (1833-1845)"; "The Major Phase (1855-1869)"; and "The Later Achievement (After 1870)." Editor John F. Loucks also excerpts one of Browning's prose works, "Introductory Essay," from an 1852 collection of private correspondence attributed to (at the time of its initial publication, anyway, though since then critics have deemed "that at least one of

the letters [in the collection] was spurious" (Loucks pg. 445)) the Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley.

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