



How to Read a Poem: And Fall in Love with Poetry (Harvest Book)

Edward Hirsch

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"Read a poem to yourself in the middle of the night. Turn on a single lamp and read it while you're alone in an otherwise dark room or while someone sleeps next to you. Say it over to yourself in a place where silence reigns and the din of culture—the constant buzzing noise that surrounds you—has momentarily stopped. This poem has come from a great distance to find you." So begins this astonishing book by one of our leading poets and critics. In an unprecedented exploration of the genre, Hirsch writes about what poetry is, why it matters, and how we can open up our imaginations so that its message—which is of vital importance in day-to-day life—can reach us and make a difference. For Hirsch, poetry is not just a part of life, it is life, and expresses like no other art our most sublime emotions. In a marvelous reading of world poetry, including verse by such poets as Wallace Stevens, Elizabeth Bishop, Pablo Neruda, William Wordsworth, Sylvia Plath, Charles Baudelaire, and many more, Hirsch discovers the meaning of their words and ideas and brings their sublime message home into our hearts. A masterful work by a master poet, this brilliant summation of poetry and human nature will speak to all readers who long to place poetry in their lives but don't know how to read it.

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