

Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)



- English, Victorian
- Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge but did not earn a degree
- In 1850, he became Poet Laureate
- Most famous poems: “Break, Break, Break,” “The Charge of the Light Brigade,” “Morte d’Arthur,” “Ulysses,” “The Lotos-Eaters”
- His poems often draw on medieval and classical legends or focus on nature imagery.

Get ready to be excommunicated, because you're about to commit a heresy. In poetics, paraphrasing has a dirty reputation. Cleanth Brooks once said that it's impossible to paraphrase a poem, and those who try are committing 'the heresy of paraphrase.' Read through Alfred Lord Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" again and distill the poem into its poetic essence. What lies at the heart of this poem? As succinctly as possible—while trying to capture the "work" this poem "does"—write a single sentence paraphrase. Be prepared to share your description with your fellow heretics.

