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| **O Captain My Captain  a poem by Walt Whitman** |
| |  | | --- | | http://www.poetry-online.org/images/flower-1.jpg | | **O Captain my Captain! our fearful trip is done, The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won, The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting, While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring; But O heart! heart! heart! O the bleeding drops of red, Where on the deck my Captain lies, Fallen cold and dead.  O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells; Rise up--for you the flag is flung for you the bugle trills, For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths for you the shores a-crowding, For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning; Here Captain! dear father! This arm beneath your head! It is some dream that on the deck, You've fallen cold and dead.  My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still; My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will; The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed and done; From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won; Exult O shores, and ring O bells! But I, with mournful tread, Walk the deck my Captain lies, Fallen cold and dead.** |
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## Tuesday, April 3, 2007

### [The Frog and the Nightingale](http://rajeevdreams.blogspot.com/2007/04/frog-and-nightingale.html)

This is my favourite poem. It is written by Vikram Seth.

Once upon a time a frog  
Croaked away in Bingle Bog  
Every night from dusk to dawn  
He croaked awn and awn and awn  
Other [](http://bp0.blogger.com/_paJ-RkTXD4M/RpBq3p_kQaI/AAAAAAAAAAU/ZihZz0QCplc/s1600-h/images.jpg)creatures loathed his voice,  
But, alas, they had no choice,  
And the crass cacophony  
Blared out from the sumac tree  
At whose foot the frog each night  
Minstrelled on till morning night  
  
Neither stones nor prayers nor sticks.  
Insults or complaints or bricks  
Stilled the frogs determination  
To display his heart's elation.  
But one night a nightingale  
In the moonlight cold and pale  
Perched upon the sumac tree  
Casting forth [](http://bp1.blogger.com/_paJ-RkTXD4M/RpBrG5_kQbI/AAAAAAAAAAc/X6Y6UMMSHpQ/s1600-h/images1.jpg)her melody  
Dumbstruck sat the gaping frog  
And the whole admiring bog  
Stared towards the sumac, rapt,  
  
And, when she had ended, clapped,  
Ducks had swum and herons waded  
To her as she serenaded  
And a solitary loon  
Wept, beneath the summer moon.  
Toads and teals and tiddlers, captured  
By her voice, cheered on, enraptured:  
“Bravo!” “Too divine!” “Encore!”  
So the nightingale once more,  
Quite unused to such applause,  
Sang till dawn without a pause.  
  
Next night when the Nightingale  
Shook her head and twitched her tail,  
Closed an eye and fluffed a wing  
And had cleared her throat to sing  
She was startled by a croak.  
“Sorry – was that you who spoke?”  
She enquired when the frog  
Hopped towards her from the bog.  
“Yes,” the frog replied. “You see,  
I'm the frog who owns this tree  
In this bog I've long been known  
For my splendid baritone  
And, of course, I wield my pen  
For Bog Trumpet now and then”  
  
“Did you… did you like my song?”  
“Not too bad – but far too long.  
The technique was fine of course,  
But it lacked a certain force”.  
“Oh!” the nightingale confessed.  
Greatly flattered and impressed  
That a critic of such note  
Had discussed her art and throat:  
“I don't think the song's divine.  
But – oh, well – at least it's mine”.  
  
“That's not much to boast about”.  
Said the heartless frog. “Without  
Proper training such as I  
- And few others can supply.  
You'll remain a mere beginner.  
But with me you'll be a winner”  
“Dearest frog”, the nightingale  
Breathed: “This is a fairy tale –  
And you are Mozart in disguise  
Come to earth before my eyes”.  
  
“Well I charge a modest fee.”  
“Oh!” “But it won't hurt, you'll see”  
Now the nightingale inspired,  
Flushed with confidence, and fired  
With both art and adoration,  
Sang – and was a huge sensation.  
Animals for miles around  
Flocked towards the magic sound,  
And the frog with great precision  
Counted heads and charged admission.  
  
Though next morning it was raining,  
He began her vocal training.  
“But I can't sing in this weather”  
“Come my dear – we'll sing together.  
Just put on your scarf and sash,  
Koo-oh-ah! ko-ash! ko-ash!”  
So the frog and nightingale  
Journeyed up and down the scale  
For six hours, till she was shivering  
and her voice was hoarse and quivering.  
  
Though subdued and sleep deprived,  
In the night her throat revived,  
And the sumac tree was bowed,  
With a breathless, titled crowd:  
Owl of Sandwich, Duck of Kent,  
Mallard and Milady Trent,  
Martin Cardinal Mephisto,  
And the Coot of Monte Cristo,  
Ladies with tiaras glittering  
In the interval sat twittering –  
And the frog observed them glitter  
With a joy both sweet and bitter.  
  
Every day the frog who'd sold her  
Songs for silver tried to scold her:  
“You must practice even longer  
Till your voice, like mine grows stronger.  
In the second song last night  
You got nervous in mid-flight.  
And, my dear, lay on more trills:  
Audiences enjoy such frills.  
You must make your public happier:  
Give them something sharper snappier.  
We must aim for better billings.  
You still owe me sixty shillings.”  
  
Day by day the nightingale  
Grew more sorrowful and pale.  
Night on night her tired song  
Zipped and trilled and bounced along,  
Till the birds and beasts grew tired  
At a voice so uninspired  
And the ticket office gross  
Crashed, and she grew more morose -  
For her ears were now addicted  
To applause quite unrestricted,  
And to sing into the night  
All alone gave no delight.  
  
Now the frog puffed up with rage.  
“Brainless bird – you're on the stage –  
Use your wits and follow fashion.  
Puff your lungs out with your passion.”  
Trembling, terrified to fail,  
Blind with tears, the nightingale  
Heard him out in silence, tried,  
Puffed up, burst a vein, and died.  
  
Said the frog: “I tried to teach her,  
But she was a stupid creature –  
Far too nervous, far too tense.  
Far too prone to influence.  
Well, poor bird – she should have known  
That your song must be your own.  
That's why I sing with panache:  
“Koo-oh-ah! ko-ash! ko-ash!”  
And the foghorn of the frog  
Blared unrivalled through the bog.



[http://img1.blogblog.com/img/icon18_wrench_allbkg.png](http://www.blogger.com/rearrange?blogID=7398285990242519935&widgetType=Gadget&widgetId=Gadget1&action=editWidget)