

Poetry in Music: Lyrics Quoted in Class 6

Cole Porter, from "Anything Goes"

Note: These lines grew by accretion; not every production uses all of them

At words poetic, I'm so pathetic
That I always have found it best
Instead of getting 'em off my chest
To let 'em rest unexpressed
I hate parading my serenading
As I'll probably miss a bar
But if this ditty is not so pretty
At least it'll tell you how great you are

You're the top
You're the Colosseum
You're the top
You're the Louvre Museum
You're a melody from a symphony by Strauss
You're a Bendel bonnet, a Shakespeare sonnet
You're Mickey Mouse

You're the Nile
You're the Tower of Pisa
You're the smile
On the Mona Lisa
I'm a worthless check, a total wreck, a flop
But if, baby, I'm the bottom
You're the top

You're the top
You're Mahatma Gandhi
You're the top
You're Napoleon brandy
You're the purple light of a summer night in Spain
You're the National Gallery, you're Garbo's salary
You're cellophane

You're sublime
You're a turkey dinner
You're the time
Of the Derby winner
I'm a toy balloon that's fated soon to pop
But if, baby, I'm the bottom
You're the top

You're the top
You're an Arrow collar
You're the top
You're a Coolidge dollar
You're the nimble tread of the feet of Fred Astaire
You're an O'Neill drama, you're Whistler's mama
You're Camembert

You're a rose, you're Inferno's Dante
You're the nose on the great Durante
I'm just in the way as the French would say
"De trop"
But if, baby, I'm the bottom
You're the top

You're the top
You're a Waldorf salad
You're the top
You're a Berlin ballad
You're a baby grand of a lady and a gent
You're an old dutch master, you're Mrs. Astor
You're Pepsodent

You're romance
You're the steppes of Russia
You're the pants
On a Roxy usher
I'm a lazy lout that's just about to stop
But if baby, I'm the bottom
You're the top

You're the top!
You're a Ritz hot toddy
You're the top!
You're a Brewster body
You're the boats that glide on the sleepy Zuider Zee
You're a Nathan panning, you're Bishop Manning
You're broccoli

You're a prize
You're a night at Coney
You're the eyes
Of Irene Bordoni
I'm a broken doll, a fol-de-rol, a blop
But if, baby, I'm the bottom
You're the top

You're the top!
You're a dance in Bali
You're the top!
You're a hot tamale
You're an angel, you simply too, too, too diveen
You're a Botticelli, you're Keats, you're Shelley
You're Ovaltine

You're a boon
You're the dam at Boulder
You're the moon
Over Mae West's shoulder
I'm a nominee of the G.O.P. or GOP
But if, baby, I'm the bottom
You're the top!

You're the top!
You're the Tower of Babel
You're the top!
You're the Whitney Stable
By the River Rhine, you're a sturdy stein of beer
You're a dress from Saks's, you're next year's taxes,
You're stratosphere

You're my thoist
You're a Drumstick Lipstick
You're da foist
In da Irish svipstick
I'm a frightened frog that can find no log to hop
But if, baby, I'm the bottom
You're the top!

Cole Porter, from "Anything Goes"

I first knew love's delight
When presto, out of the blue
A dream appeared one night
And whispered, "How do you do?"
I knew I was tempting fate
But I took it straight to my heart
My fears were right
And now we must part

Goodbye, little dream, goodbye
You made my romance sublime
Now it's time to fly
For the stars have fled
From the heavens
The moon's deserted the hill
And the sultry breeze
That sang in the trees
Is suddenly strangely still

It's done, little dream, it's done
So bid me a fond farewell
We both had our fun
Was it Romeo or Juliet
Who said, when about to die
Love is not all peaches and cream
Little dream, goodbye

Charles K. Harris: "After the Ball is Over"

A little maiden climbed an old man's knee,
Begged for a story — "Do, Uncle, please.
Why are you single; why live alone?
Have you no babies; have you no home?"
"I had a sweetheart years, years ago;
Where she is now pet, you will soon know.
List to the story, I'll tell it all,
I believed her faithless after the ball."

*After the ball is over,
After the break of morn—
After the dancers' leaving;
After the stars are gone;
Many a heart is aching,
If you could read them all;
Many the hopes that have vanished
After the ball.*

Bright lights were flashing in the grand ballroom,
Softly the music playing sweet tunes.
There came my sweetheart, my love, my own—
"I wish some water; leave me alone."
When I returned dear there stood a man,
Kissing my sweetheart as lovers can.
Down fell the glass pet, broken, that's all,
Just as my heart was after the ball.

Long years have passed child, I've never wed.
True to my lost love though she is dead.
She tried to tell me, tried to explain;
I would not listen, pleadings were vain.
One day a letter came from that man,
He was her brother, the letter ran.
That's why I'm lonely, no home at all;
I broke her heart pet, after the ball.

Yip Harburg: from "The Wizard of Oz"

Somewhere over the rainbow
Way up high
There's a land that I heard of
Once in a lullaby

Somewhere over the rainbow
Skies are blue
And the dreams that you dare to dream
Really do come true

Someday I'll wish upon a star
And wake up where the clouds are far behind me
Where troubles melt like lemon drops
Away above the chimney tops
That's where you'll find me

Somewhere over the rainbow
Bluebirds fly
Birds fly over the rainbow
Why then, oh, why can't I?

If happy little bluebirds fly
Beyond the rainbow
Why, oh why can't I?

Johnny Mercer: from "Breakfast at Tiffany's"

Moon river, wider than a mile
I'm crossing you in style some day
Oh, dream maker, you heart breaker
Wherever you're goin', I'm goin' your way

Two drifters, off to see the world
There's such a lot of world to see
We're after the same rainbow's end
Waitin' round the bend
My huckleberry friend
Moon river and me

Stephen Sondheim: from "A Little Night Music"

Isn't it rich?
Are we a pair?
Me here at last on the ground,
You in mid-air,
Where are the clowns?

Isn't it bliss?
Don't you approve?
One who keeps tearing around,
One who can't move,
Where are the clowns?
There ought to be clowns?

Just when I'd stopped opening doors,
Finally knowing the one that I wanted was yours
Making my entrance again with my usual flair
Sure of my lines
No one is there

Don't you love farce?
My fault, I fear
I thought that you'd want what I want
Sorry, my dear!
But where are the clowns
Send in the clowns
Don't bother, they're here

Isn't it rich?
Isn't it queer?
Losing my timing this late in my career
But where are the clowns?
There ought to be clowns
Well, maybe next year

George M. Cohan: "Over There"

Johnnie, get your gun
Get your gun, get your gun
Take it on the run
On the run, on the run

Hear them calling, you and me
Every son of liberty
Hurry right away
No delay, go today

Make your daddy glad
To have had such a lad
Tell your sweetheart not to pine
To be proud her boy's in line

*Over there, over there
Send the word, send the word over there
That the Yanks are coming
The drums rum tumming everywhere*

*So prepare, say a prayer
Send the word, send the word to beware
We'll be over, we're coming over
And we won't come back till it's over, over there*

Johnnie, get your gun
Get your gun, get your gun
Johnnie show the Hun
Who's a son of a gun

Hoist the flag and let her fly
Yankee Doodle do or die
Pack your little kit
Show your grit, do your bit

Yankee to the ranks
From the towns and the tanks
Make your mother proud of you
And the old red, white and blue

*Over there, over there
Send the word, send the word over there
That the Yanks are coming
The drums rum tumming everywhere*

*So prepare, say a prayer
Send the word, send the word to beware
We'll be over, we're coming over
And we won't come back till it's over, over there.*

Yip Harburg: "Brother, can you spare a dime?"

Once I built a railroad, made it run
Made it race against time
Once I built a railroad, now it's done
Brother can you spare a dime?

Once I built a tower to the sun
Brick and rivet and lime
Once I built a tower, now it's done
Brother can you spare a dime?

Once in khaki suits
Gee, we looked swell
Full of that Yankee Doodle De Dum
Half a million boots went slogging through hell
I was the kid with the drum

Say don't you remember, they called me Al
It was Al all the time
Say don't you remember, I'm your pal!
Brother can you spare a dime?

Jack Yellen: from "Chasing Rainbows"

So long sad times
Go 'long bad times
We are rid of you at last
Howdy gay times
Cloudy gray times
You are now a thing of the past

*Happy days are here again
The skies above are clear again
So let's sing a song of cheer again
Happy days are here again*

All together shout it now
There's no one who can doubt it now
So let's tell the world about it now
Happy days are here again