***kidnap poem***by Nikki Giovanni

ever been kidnapped  
by a poet  
if i were a poet  
i'd kidnap you  
put you in my phrases and meter  
you to jones beach  
or maybe coney island  
or maybe just to my house  
lyric you in lilacs  
dash you in the rain  
blend into the beach  
to complement my see  
play the lyre for you  
ode you with my love song  
anything to win you  
wrap you in the red Black green  
show you off to mama  
yeah if i were a poet i'd kid  
nap you

# **THE FIRST LINE OF A POEM**

Billy Collins

# Before it flutters into my mouth,

# I might spend days squinting

# into the wind

# like an old man

# trying to thread a needle

# by a window

# in the dying light of late afternoon.

# In a chair,

# he aims the limp end

# at the dim glint

# of the impossible eye,

# narrower than the door of heaven

# or the sliver of moon

# that will not rise

# from behind pines

# until the needle

# finally slides

# along the thin loop

# and he eases

# into his all-night stitching,

# sipping the new wine,

# singing a song

# the color of his thread

**Why Do Poets Write?**

Richard Jones

My wife, a psychiatrist, sleeps  
through my reading and writing in bed,  
the half-whispered lines,   
manuscripts piled between us,  
  
but in the deep part of night  
when her beeper sounds  
she bolts awake to return the page  
of a patient afraid he'll kill himself.  
  
She sits in her robe in the kitchen,  
listening to the anguished voice  
on the phone. She becomes  
the vessel that contains his fear,  
  
someone he can trust to tell  
things I would tell to a poem.

Poetry **by Pablo Neruda**

And it was at that age ... Poetry arrived   
in search of me. I don't know, I don't know where   
it came from, from winter or a river.   
I don't know how or when,   
no they were not voices, they were not   
words, nor silence,   
but from a street I was summoned,   
from the branches of night,   
abruptly from the others,   
among violent fires   
or returning alone,   
there I was without a face   
and it touched me.   
  
I did not know what to say, my mouth   
had no way   
with names,   
my eyes were blind,   
and something started in my soul,   
fever or forgotten wings,   
and I made my own way,   
deciphering   
that fire,

# **Because You Asked about the Line Between Prose and Poetry**

# By Howard Nemerov

# Sparrows were feeding in a freezing drizzle

# That while you watched turned to pieces of snow

# Riding a gradient invisible

# From silver aslant to random, white, and slow.

# There came a moment that you couldn’t tell.

# And then they clearly flew instead of fell.

and I wrote the first faint line,   
faint, without substance, pure   
nonsense,   
pure wisdom   
of someone who knows nothing,   
and suddenly I saw   
the heavens   
unfastened   
and open,   
planets,   
palpitating plantations,   
shadow perforated,   
riddled   
with arrows, fire and flowers,   
the winding night, the universe.   
  
And I, infinitesimal being,   
drunk with the great starry   
void,   
likeness, image of   
mystery,   
felt myself a pure part   
of the abyss,   
I wheeled with the stars,   
my heart broke loose on the wind.