Tenses are verb forms that relate the situation of an action in time relative to some other time, usually the present moment (past, present, future). Aspects, by contrast, “are different ways of viewing the internal temporal consistency of a situation” (Bernard Comrie, following Jens Holt). A clear example of this in English is the distinction between the simple present or past (“Alex sings well; Alex sang well”) and the present or past progressive (“Alex is singing well; Alex was singing well”). Although these are often casually referred to as different tenses, the distinction is really one of aspect: how the event is structured in time, rather than when it happened. Standard English has fewer grammatically differentiated aspects than some other languages—Slavic languages for example, or, intriguingly, vernacular African-American English—but this does not mean that aspevtual implications and distinctions are lacking. Both of the forms above (the “simple” and the “progressive”) are capable of housing multiple aspevtual implications: “Alex sings well”, for example, can describe, depending on context: an action happening right now; a capacity; a prediction; or a habitual action. This means, therefore, that aspevtual force tends to present in English as ambiguity and nuance: the aesthetic materials, in other words, of poetry. This is where (as a literary critic and not a linguist) my interest lies. In this paper, after giving a brief introduction to aspect and illustrating the concept with some examples, I will consider the place of aspect in particular poetic effects. What are we to make of the aspevtual implications of “She dwelt among th’ untrodden ways”, or “I go, I go, look how I go!”, or “The woods decay, the woods decay and fall”? This paper attempts to gather the right examples and frame the right questions: and perhaps even suggest some answers.