Poet and critic Randall Jarrell was born in Nashville, Tennessee, and attended Vanderbilt University, where he received both a BA and an MA. At Vanderbilt, he came under the influence of poet-critics such as John Crowe Ransom and Robert Penn Warren, and also became close friends with poet Robert Lowell. His poetry, greatly influenced by W.H. Auden and Robert Frost, often expresses what has been called “the common dialogue of Americans.”