

The Road Not Taken

Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Jabberwocky

Lewis Carroll

'Twas brillig, and the slithy
toves
Did gyre and gimble in the
wabe:
All mimsy were the
borogoves,
And the mome raths
outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my
son!
The jaws that bite, the claws
that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and
shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in
hand:
Long time the manxome foe
he sought --
So rested he by the Tumtum
tree,
And stood awhile in thought

And as in uffish thought he
stood,

The Jabberwock, with eyes of
flame,
Came whiffing through the
tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! and
through and through
The vorpal blade went
snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its
head
He went galumphing back.

"And has thou slain the
Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my
beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh!
Callyay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy
toves
Did gyre and gimble in the
wabe:
All mimsy were the
borogoves,
And the mome raths
outgrabe.

A Complaint to His Purse

Geoffrey Chaucer

To yow, my purs, and to non othir wyght
Complayne I, for ye ben my lady dere!
I am so sory, now that ye been lyght;
For certes, but yf ye make me hevye chere,
Me were as leef be leyd upon my bere;
For which unto your mercy thus I crye,
Beth hevye ayeyn, or elles mot I dye!

Now voucheth sauf this day, or hyt be nyght,
That I of yow the blisful soun may here,
Or se your colour lyk the sonne bryght,
That of yelownesse had never pere.
Ye be my lyf, ye be myne hertes stere,
Quene of comfort and of gode companye;
Beth hevye ayeyn, or elles mot I dye!

Now purs, that ben to me my lyves lyght
And saveour, as doun in this worlde here,
Out of this towne helpe me thurgh your myght,
Syn that ye wylle nat ben my tresorerer;
For I am shave as nye as any frere.
But yet I prey unto youre curtesye,
Beth hevye ayeyn, or elles mot I dye!

Excerpt from A Midsummer Night's Dream – Act V, Scene 1, lines 414-429

William Shakespeare

Puck.
If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
if you pardon, we will mend:
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call;
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.

Richard III

Geoffrey Chaucer

We are things of dry hours
and the involuntary plan,
grayed in, and gray.

"Dream" mate, a giddy sound,
not strong like "rent,"
"feeding a wife,"
"satisfying a man."

But could a dream sent up
through onion fumes
his white and violet
fight with fried potatoes

And yesterday's garbage ripening
in the hall,
Fitter, or sing an aria down
these rooms,

Even if we were willing to let it in,
Had time to warm it, keep it very clean,
Anticipate a message, let it begin?

We wonder.
But not well! not for a minute!

Since Number Five is out of
the bathroom now,
We think of lukewarm water,
hope to get in it.

Under the Waterfall

Thomas Hardy

"Whenever I plunge my arm, like this,
In a basin of water, I never miss
The sweet sharp sense of a fugitive day
Fetched back from its thickening shroud of gray.

Hence the only prime
And real love-rhyme
That I know by heart,
And that leaves no smart,
Is the purt of a little valley fall

About three spans wide and two spans tall
Over a table of solid rock,
And into a scoop of the self-same block;

The purt of a runlet that never ceases
In stir of kingdoms, in wars, in peaces;
With a hollow boiling voice it speaks
And has spoken since hills were turfless peaks.

'And why gives this the only prime
Idea to you of a real love-rhyme?
And why does plunging your arm in a bowl
Full of spring water, bring throbs to your soul?"

'Well, under the fall, in a crease of the stone,
Though where precisely none ever has known,
Tanned darkly, nothing to show how prized,
And by now with its smoothness opalized,
Is a drinking-glass:

For down that pass

My lover and I

Walked under a sky
Of blue with a leaf-wave awning of green,
In the burn of August, to paint the scene,

And we placed our basket of fruit and wine the runlet's rim,
where we sat to dine;
And when we had drunk from the glass together,
Arched by the oak-copse from the weather,
I held the vessel to mine in the fall,

where it slipped, and sank, and was past recall,
Though we stooped and plumbd the little abyss
With long bared arms. There the glass still is.
And, as said, if I thrust my arm below
Cold water in basin or bowl, a three
From the past awakens a sense of that time,

And the glass both used, and the cascade's rhyme.
The basin seems the pool, and its edge
The hard smooth face of the brook-side ledge,
And the leafy pattern of china-ware
The hanging plants that were bathing there.

'By migh, by day, when it shines or lours,
There lies intact that chalice of ours,
And its presence adds to the rhyme of love,
Persistently sung by the fall above.
No lip has touched it since his and mine
In turns therefrom sipped lovers' wine;

For down that pass
My lover and I
Walked under a sky