

Twelve River RIPPLES

Favourite Poem



Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

By Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Favourite Poem cont.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening – A Personal View.

The first time I came across Robert Frost's poetry was as a teenager back in the Seventies, studying for my O-level English Literature. Poetry is rarely a hit with restless adolescents, but Frost's poems keep returning. I particularly love this poem for its simplicity, combined with a profound depth.

There is something sublime in this poem; thoughts subside, and the chatter of the mind ceases. Frost sees a sight that reflects the grandness and majesty of nature. He sees life as it truly is and not as he wants it to be. We see this with him. Yet we must live our lives. We do have another choice though, and it is to stop and see that life is more than we think – from the petty worries to the enormous folly of war, our mind busies itself with its own self-importance. What transcends all this heavy mind activity is available to us in an instant, and this is the peace that Frost found on that snowy night. He conveys this lovingly, and even acknowledges his own impatience in the personification of his horse. His horse is practical and knows that there are needs that must be met and duties to perform.

Frost, in melancholic mood, moves on. Where he is going, we don't know. We can guess he is going home, or maybe he has left his home of a few years?

He is tired but he knows he has to arrive at his destination. Could it be that he is describing not a physical destination, but an internal one? The recognition of severe illness, the end of a relationship, of his own death? We don't know. What we do know is the beauty and peace that he encounters when he suddenly sees the woods.

Words are often limited, even useless, to provide us with tools to describe the indescribable. Yet the irony is that poetry provides a way in which we can feel towards that which our minds fail to grasp. We find ourselves in a different space where concepts melt and a rich picture of life in all its beauty arises. Words move from being mere tools to ethereal building blocks.

Frost has cropped up many times in my life. Please let me know your thoughts on this and other poems by Frost by messaging me on:



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