



The Road Not Taken



This well-known poem is about making choices, and the choices that shape us. Robert Frost is an American poet who writes simply, but insightfully, about common, ordinary experiences.

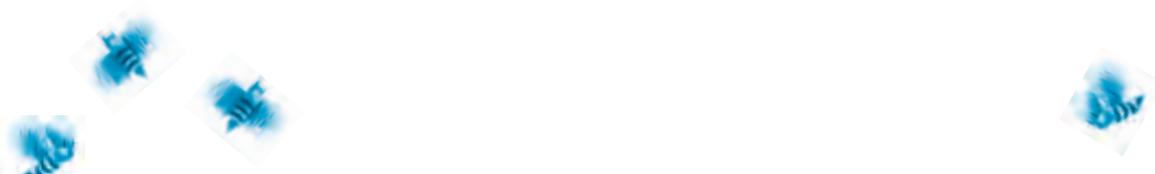
Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, 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 travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.

ROBERT FROST



GLOSSARY

diverged: separated and took a different direction

undergrowth: dense growth of plants and bushes

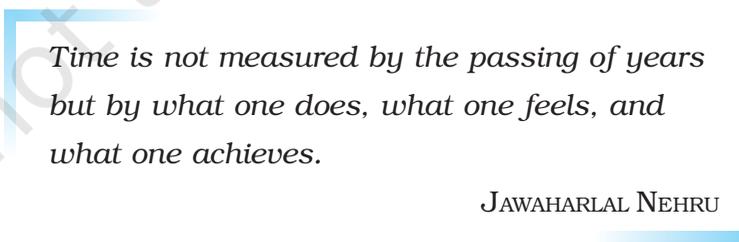
wanted wear: had not been used

hence: here, in the future



Thinking about the Poem

- I. 1. Where does the traveller find himself? What problem does he face?
 2. Discuss what these phrases mean to you.
 - (i) a yellow wood
 - (ii) it was grassy and wanted wear
 - (iii) the passing there
 - (iv) leaves no step had trodden black
 - (v) how way leads on to way
 3. Is there any difference between the two roads as the poet describes them
 - (i) in stanzas two and three?
 - (ii) in the last two lines of the poem?
 4. What do you think the last two lines of the poem mean? (Looking back, does the poet regret his choice or accept it?)
- II. 1. Have you ever had to make a difficult choice (or do you think you will have difficult choices to make)? How will you make the choice (for what reasons)?
 2. After you have made a choice do you always think about what might have been, or do you accept the reality?



*Time is not measured by the passing of years
but by what one does, what one feels, and
what one achieves.*

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

