

Laugh and Be Merry
by
John Masefield

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The poet, John Masefield suggests that we should have a positive attitude in life. Life is short so we must enjoy the fruits of happiness. Every moment of our life should be enjoyed and cheered. The God created the moon and the stars for the pleasure of human being. So we should be inspired by God's meaningful creation. The poet compares the world with an inn where all human beings are temporary guests. We should enjoy life till it lasts and till the music of life ends.

The poem 'Laugh and be merry' by John Masefield probes the premise of living life to the full. The poet advises that we should have a constructive outlook in life. Life is brief and it is not to be frittered away in sorrow and despair. He advocates us to get pleasure from our lives in this world, since the universe itself is a manifestation of the joyousness of God. Each instant of our life should be savoured and rejoiced. God created the moon and the stars for the happiness of human being. So we should be enlivened by God's purposeful creation. The poet compares the world with an inn where all human beings are temporary guests.

We should enjoy life till it comes to an end and till the music of life ends. Laugh and be merry for the world is a much better place with a happy song and to live in a world that is ready to blow in the teeth of wrong. We should be always conscious of the injustice and wrong doings of the world and strive to remedy them so that the world will remain a happy place to live in for all. We must not just rejoice but also be dynamic in tackling evil. Laugh and give no leave to sorrow or to worries for the life is short, a thread a length of span. Laugh from the depth of your heart and with optimism and be proud to belong to the everlasting and spectacular procession of the human race; a pageant with an impressive display in celebration of life.

Call to mind the olden times, when God created Heaven and Earth for joy. Just as a poet experiences the joy of creating a poem and is enthralled in the process, God was enraptured by His creation of the universe; the heaven and earth. He made them both and filled them with the strong red wine; a worldwide symbol of joy in most poetry; of His mirth; joviality or cheerfulness, particularly when consorted with laughter. God has bestowed the universe with the splendid joy of the stars and the earth, we must laugh and drink from the deep blue cup of the sky; derive complete delight we can by observing the sky, the birds, clouds, stars, and so on.

The sky is appears over us like an upturned cup and is blue in colour; hence it is compared to a cup, probably to a cup of wine the symbol of joy. Each and every one is welcome to join the ecstatic song of the celestial figures. (It was a common belief in the ancient times that the astral figures created divine music as they revolve.) All through the outpouring of the Heavenly wine we can continue to laugh, strive and struggle, work and drink for the Almighty shows His indication of joy on His beloved green earth. We should live as if we are brothers akin (related by blood.

Here we can see a hint at the significance of universal brotherhood. Masefield then compares our sojourn on the earth to the life in an inn or a hotel. We are like the guests in an inn, living briefly, staying for a short time. We check into (birth) and check out (death) from this splendid inn (the magnificent earth. Just like the guests in an inn stay for a short time, we stay for a short time on this earth. The guests enjoy to the full, the dance till the dancing stop and the music ends in the Ball room. Similarly we should enjoy our life to the last breath; and the song of life finishes.

Life is compared to a game also. While playing we enjoy the game without fretting about victory or defeat. The game fills our mind with immense pleasure and thrill. Let us play the game of life cheerfully to the end.

In his poems John Masefield expresses a love of ordinary of and all of life in its reality. He encourages us to enjoy our lives in this world, because the universe is itself an expression of the joy of God. The strong rhythm of the lines in itself suggests a joyful dance. Laughter is the best medicine. Laugh and be merry for the world is a much better place with a happy song and to live in a world that is ready to blow in the teeth of wrong; we must not only rejoice but also be active in attacking evil. Laugh and give no place to sorrow or to worries for the time is brief, a thread a length of span; about nine inches: the distance between the tip of the thumb and the tip of the little finger when the hand is fully spread out, i.e. life is short and like a thread is easily lost.

Laugh sincerely and hopefully to be proud enough to belong to the old pageant of man; procession with a spectacular display in celebration of a holiday. Recall the ancient times, when God made Heaven and Earth for joy he took in a rhyme; identity in sound of some part: a word agreeing with another in terminal sound: verse or poetry having correspondence in the terminal sounds of the lines: a poem or piece of verse having such correspondence; He made them both and filled them with the strong red wine; a common symbol of joy in most poetry; of His mirth; gaiety or jollity, esp. when accompanied by laughter: amusement or laughter; because of the splendid joy.

Road not Taken
by
Robert Frost

Summary & Analysis

**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**

Have you ever found yourself caught between a rock and a hard place, trying to make a difficult decision?

Maybe you've had to choose between two equally desirable things, like following a career path to become an astronaut or a doctor.

You may have considered the different paths of study or activity each choice would lead you down.

We've all been faced with challenging decisions in our lives, and sometimes the difficulty of making those decisions arises from the fear of not knowing if what we choose is right, or what will happen as a result of our choice.

Well, the famous American poet, **Robert Frost**, once wrote a poem that describes this feeling exactly.

'The Road Not Taken', first published in 1916, is perhaps Frost's most famous poem.

The final lines in particular, 'Two roads diverged in a yellow wood and I - I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference', are often quoted and referred to as inspirational words that challenge us to overcome obstacles in life.

The poem describes someone standing at a fork, or turning point, in a road in the woods, trying to decide which path he's going to take.

He looks down one road as far as he can see, and after thinking for another minute, decides to take the other one because it looks like nobody's been that way yet, and he's curious about where it leads.

He thinks maybe he might come back another day and try out the other path but he has a feeling that the road he's chosen will lead him to new places and discoveries, and he probably won't be back.

He thinks wistfully about that road, the road not taken, and where he might have wound up if he'd gone that way instead. Part of him regrets his decision, but he also realizes that the things he's seen and the places he's gone because of the direction he chose has made him who he is.

'The Road Not Taken' is more than a poem about someone trying to decide which road he's going to take on a stroll through the woods. It's actually a poem about **the journey of life**. The **two roads diverged in a yellow wood** symbolize a person's life.

The narrator's choice about which road to take represents the different decisions we sometimes have to make and how those decisions will affect the future.

Think of the expression, 'down the road', that we often use to describe something that might happen months or even years from now, and you'll see how Frost is making the connection between life and traveling.

All the World's a Stage
by
Shakespeare

Summary & Analysis

All the world's a stage
- Shakespeare

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,

Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

As *All The World's A Stage* begins, you are dragged to a stage. It is like you are the audience, and you are watching a drama on the stage, right in front of your eyes.

All The World's A Stage tells you that all the men and women are mere characters in the drama, which is played on the stage (in the world). 'They have their exits and their entrances'; this means that all the people take birth and then die after a certain period of time.

When the man enters the world, he has seven different ages or phases to go through. When he goes through these ages, he has to play different roles. These roles depict a man as a son, his responsibilities as a brother, father, husband, a fighter for the nation, etc.

The man begins his act on the stage as an infant; he pukes in the arms of his nurse and cries to be in the comfort of his mother.

The second act starts right when he turns into a school going boy, who is unwilling to go to school and unwilling to take the responsibility of being a student.

The third act then comes when he turns into a lover; his lover is the only person he sees dancing in front of his eyes. For him, there is absolutely no other place that can comfort him, then the eyebrow of his lover.

The fourth act of *All The World's A Stage* portrays the man as a soldier or a fight for the nation. His beard depicts all those strange oaths that he takes to protect his country and all the men and women living in it. No doubt he quarrels, but he also maintains his dignity to create and develop his reputation in front of others around him. This is perhaps the toughest stage in his life.

Then comes the fifth act, where he turns into justice, the one who knows what is good and what is right. At this stage, he is perhaps the best person to approach to find out who is correct and who is wrong.

The fifth stage comes into his life as he enters the stage of Pantalone, where he has a high status in society, yet he is greedy for more.

This stage does not remain for long in his life.

Alas! The last stage comes for him to go through oblivion. No matter how hard he tries to remember things, he is just not able to.

When he enters old-age, he turns into a child again.

Slowly, he begins losing his teeth, his vision, the taste in his mouth, and the love or greed for everything that he once wanted in his life.

The seven stages of a man's life also refer to The Seven Ages Of Man.

These ages are infant, school-going boy, lover/husband, soldier/fighter, justice/ability to understand right and wrong, Pantalone (greediness and high in status), and old-age.

In this poem, Shakespeare has compared life with a stage. He has used different words to beautify the poem in a wonderful way.

He has taken this concept from medieval philosophy, which showed glimpses of several different groups as the seven deadly sins for theological reasons.

Theology is the study of God's nature as well as religious belief.

Literary Devices in *All The World's A Stage*

There are two major poetic devices used in this poem – simile and metaphor.

Simile examples in the poem: ‘creeping like a snail’; ‘soldier... bearded like the pard’; etc.

Metaphor examples in the poem: The entire poem itself is more like symbolism; men and women are portrayed as players whereas life is portrayed as the stage.

Repetition is another figure of speech used in this poem; words like sans, age, etc. are repeated.

The poet has used a narrative form to express his innermost emotions about how he thinks that the world is a stage and all the people living in it are mere players or characters.

These characters go through seven different phases in their lives.

Although the poem is quoted in full below, you can also read *All The World's A Stage* here at Poetry Foundation.

***Night of the Scorpion* Summary and Analysis: Nissim Ezekiel**

Introduction

Nissim Ezekiel's *Night of the Scorpion* is a solid yet straightforward explanation on the intensity of self-effacing love. Full to the overflow with Indianness, it catches a very much withdrawn high contrast depiction of Indian town existing with all its superstitious straightforwardness. The writer sensationalizes a clash of thoughts battled during the evening in lamplight amongst great and insidiousness; amongst haziness and light; amongst realism and visually impaired confidence. What's more, out of this disarray, there emerges a surprising champ – the magnanimous love of a mother.

Night of the Scorpion makes a significant effect on the reader with an interaction of pictures identifying with great and malicious, light and dimness. At that point the impact is elevated indeed with the droning of the general population and its mysterious, incantatory impact. The excellence of the poem lies in that the mother's remark handles the people suddenly on basic, compassionate grounds with an unexpected punch.

Summary:

The poem opens in a way that recommends reflection—the speaker recollects the night his own mother was stung by a scorpion, which bit his mother as a result of its savage drive, while stowing away underneath a sack of rice to escape from the rain. The speaker particularly recollects this night because of this occasion, the mother getting nibbled. The manner by which the mother is chomped is likewise appeared in 'blaze of fiendish tail'; the speaker figures out how to propose that the scorpion is evil with its "diabolic" tail and stresses its speed with the word streak. The scorpion at that point escapes the scene and, in this way, hazards the rain once more.

A photo of a religious town is made by what the neighbours do to deaden the scorpion ("buzz the name of God"). Their purpose behind this is they trust that as the scorpion moves, his toxin moves in the blood of the mother. It is likewise suggested that they live in a minding, affectionate town by the way that the neighbours feel welcome by any stretch of the imagination. The speaker is disappointed by their entry, contrasting them with flies (undesirable and bothering) as they veritably hummed around the mother. They endeavoured to give reasons, and many depended on superstition to think about what the issue was. The villagers attempted to discover the scorpion, yet they proved unable. By saying, "With candles and with lanterns throwing giant scorpion shadows on the sun-baked walls." the speaker is suggesting there is yet fiendish frequenting the house, even after the scorpion had gone out. This could likewise be inferring that the shadows of the different household utensils and different things are changed over by the cerebrum of the searchers into the shadow of a scorpion-as that is the thing that they are searching for. Numerous things were attempted to help calm the mother's agony, yet none worked. The speaker watches, defenceless.

The speaker's dad who was cynic and pragmatist, attempted to spare his better half by utilizing powder, blend, herbs, cross breed and even by pouring a little paraffin upon the chomped toe and put a match to it, this reflects to one of the town labourer saying, "May the transgressions of your past birth be consumed with extreme heat today around evening time." Which the dad endeavours to do; not for consuming her wrongdoings but rather to consume with smouldering heat the toxic substance living inside the mother, which mirrors her transgressions being gave penance for. The speaker watches the vain sacred man playing out his beguiling spells, yet he can't

successfully stop it. The laborers, at last tolerating the destiny of the mother, endeavour to put a positive turn on the circumstance by saying that regardless of whether the mother kicked the bucket, her next life (An Indian Conviction) would be less difficult, as she making amends for her future sins by persevering through this agony. Following twenty hours, the toxic substance loses its sting and the mother is alright. An indication of her overall love and love for her youngsters is demonstrated when she expresses gratitude toward God that she was stung and not her kids.

It originated from a religious foundation and Nissim composed this lyric endeavouring to give the impression of outrage, yet additionally a fundamental message of protective love, alongside a trace of culture and superstition.

Main Theme:

Pictures of the dim powers of insidiousness possess large amounts of Night of the Scorpion; the underhanded tail of the scorpion, goliath scorpion shadows on the sun-prepared dividers and the night itself point to detestable. Truth be told, the ballad is about the correlated inquiry with respect to what can overcome fiendish. Where superstition, logic and religion demonstrated useless, the self-destroying affection for a mother had its say. Love overcomes all, and that is all you must know.

Superstition:

Superstition is an imperative topic that is canvassed in the verse of Nissim Ezekiel. His verse investigates certain aspects of the Indian life that are so frequently addressed and thought about out of date, yet at the same time pervasive. In Night of The Scorpion, Nissim Ezekiel depicts a circumstance that is illustrative of the rustic Indian ethos and draws out the commonness of such a circumstance.

Analysis:

Night of the Scorpion is a free verse poem with 8 stanzas and a total of 47 lines. There is no set rhyme scheme. The meter is mixed.

The scorpion is seen by some as an evil force, bringer of pain and hardship and even death. Note the use of the word diabolic as the desperate creature stings the woman and makes off out into the rain.

The peasants are being superstitious and old fashioned, even illiterate, not having moved on in their thinking and culture.

The father meanwhile is just the opposite in the sense that he is a rational, reductive type of person who is unimpressed with the peasants and their mumbo-jumbo. Yet, he resorts to using paraffin on the mother's toe, setting it alight, not a very scientific response.

The mother perseveres, she is in agony all night but finally triumphs and does not succumb to the venom of the scorpion. For all that time she was unable to utter a word, capable only of groans, until the pain subsided and the relief she felt gave her the power to sum her experience up: thank goodness it was her who took the sting and not her children, for they probably would not have survived.

"Night of the scorpion" is ordinarily an Indian poem by an Indian writer whose enthusiasm for the Indian soil and its customary human occasions of everyday Indian life is sublime. A decent numerous Indians are ignorant and are indiscriminately superstitious. In any case, they are straightforward,

adoring and adorable. They endeavour to spare the casualty by doing whatever they can. Be that as it may, they don't succeed.

The poem is translated as an emblematic juxtaposition of haziness and light. The night, the scorpion, the toxic substance and the agony speak to dimness. The ceaseless rain remains for expectation and recovery. Candles, lamps, neighbours and at last the recuperation of the mother speak to light. The poem can likewise be thought of as emblematic of Good and Insidiousness as well.

Ezekiel uses a simile comparing the villagers to 'swarms of flies' (line 8). It is striking that he uses an insect image to describe the people's reaction to an invertebrate's sting. He develops the simile in the following line: 'they buzzed the name of God' (line 9). What does the fly simile suggest about Ezekiel's attitude to the neighbours?

The neighbours' candles and lanterns throw 'giant scorpion shadows' on the walls (line 13). We know that the scorpion has already fled, so are these images of the people themselves? (A scorpion has eight legs, so the shadow of a small group of people standing together could look like a scorpion.) If so, what does this show about Ezekiel's attitude to the neighbours?

There is a contrast between the neighbours' 'peace of understanding' (line 31) and the mother who 'twisted... groaning on a mat' (line 35). It is ironic that they are at peace because of her discomfort.

There is alliteration throughout the poem that helps to link or emphasize ideas: the scorpion is seen 'Parting with his poison' (line 5), Ezekiel's father tries 'herb and hybrid' (line 38), Ezekiel sees 'flame feeding' (line 41) on his mother. Underline other examples of alliteration and see if you can explain the effectiveness of their use? There is a lot of repetition, so that we hear the villagers' prayers and incantations. Ezekiel uses direct speech, 'May...' to dramatize the scene and the echoed 'they said' is like a chorus: A group of characters in classical Greek drama who comment on the action but don't take part in it. In a song, the chorus is a section that is regularly repeated.
