



ENGLISH PROGRAM

#1

**The Road Not Taken**

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.

*By Robert Frost*



ENGLISH PROGRAM

**#2**  
**Song of Powers**

Mine, said the stone,  
mine is the hour.  
I crush the scissors,  
such is my power.  
Stronger than wishes,  
my power, alone.

Mine, said the paper,  
mine are the words  
that smother the stone  
with imagined birds,  
reams of them, flown  
from the mind of the shaper.

Mine, said the scissors,  
mine all the knives  
gashing through paper's  
ethereal lives;  
nothing's so proper  
as tattering wishes.

As stone crushes scissors,  
as paper snuffs stone  
and scissors cut paper,  
all end alone.  
So heap up your paper  
and scissor your wishes  
and uproot the stone  
from the top of the hill.  
They all end alone  
as you will, you will.

*By David Mason*



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**#3**  
**The Gift**

To pull the metal splinter from my palm  
my father recited a story in a low voice.  
I watched his lovely face and not the blade.  
Before the story ended, he'd removed  
the iron sliver I thought I'd die from.

I can't remember the tale,  
but hear his voice still, a well  
of dark water, a prayer.  
And I recall his hands,  
two measures of tenderness  
he laid against my face,  
the flames of discipline  
he raised above my head.

Had you entered that afternoon  
you would have thought you saw a man  
planting something in a boy's palm,  
a silver tear, a tiny flame.  
Had you followed that boy  
you would have arrived here,  
where I bend over my wife's right hand.

Look how I shave her thumbnail down  
so carefully she feels no pain.  
Watch as I lift the splinter out.  
I was seven when my father  
took my hand like this,  
and I did not hold that shard  
between my fingers and think,  
Metal that will bury me,  
christen it Little Assassin,



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Ore Going Deep for My Heart.  
And I did not lift up my wound and cry,  
Death visited here!  
I did what a child does  
when he's given something to keep.  
I kissed my father.

*By Li Young*

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**#4**

**i wish you love  
kindness  
understanding  
i wish you abundance  
that you will always have  
more than enough  
more than you need  
so you can be generous  
of heart and spirit**

**i wish you peace  
the kind that washes over your entire being  
like cool waves  
on warm shores  
peace  
knowing that the distance  
is intentional  
the endings  
for a purpose  
i wish you the peace  
that comes  
from honoring yourself**

**i wish you family that endures  
friendship as close as genes**

**i wish you a village  
linked and strong**

**i wish you a voice  
that speak  
even when it shakes  
that announces dream  
even if it has to whisper**



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**i wish you healin  
of old wounds  
old habits  
cycles broken**

**i wish you music  
art  
poetry  
dance**

**i wish you language for your soul**

**i wish you power  
that empowers the powerless  
i wish you boldness  
fearlessness  
i wish you empathy**

**i wish you  
epiphanies  
enlightenment**

**ascension  
i wish you  
joyful new beginnings  
fresh new chapters  
strength to start over**

**I wish you  
a happy new year**

**“now look in the mirror  
and read this to your beautiful self  
speak life to yourself  
love yourself**



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**you are worthy”**

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**#5**  
**Reluctance**

Out through the fields and the woods  
And over the walls I have wended;  
I have climbed the hills of view  
And looked at the world, and descended;  
I have come by the highway home,  
And lo, it is ended.

The leaves are all dead on the ground,  
Save those that the oak is keeping  
To ravel them one by one  
And let them go scraping and creeping  
Out over the crusted snow,  
When others are sleeping.

And the dead leaves lie huddled and still,  
No longer blown hither and thither;  
The last lone aster is gone;  
The flowers of the witch-hazel wither;  
The heart is still aching to seek,  
But the feet question 'Whither?'

Ah, when to the heart of man  
Was it ever less than a treason  
To go with the drift of things,  
To yield with a grace to reason,  
And bow and accept the end  
Of a love or a season?

*By Robert Frost*





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**#6**  
**Pieces**

Are we not all but bits and pieces  
glued together, torn apart  
A piece of me,  
a piece of you,  
amalgamating into one

Pieces, pieces,  
fragments all  
brothers, mothers, sisters, nieces  
Pieces, pieces,  
pieces all  
Life is art and art is life

You and I 'neath sun and stars  
of magazines with glossy sheen  
Collage of life, of culture, strife,  
oppression, struggle, civil rights  
Days of night and nights of day,  
work hands share a slice of life  
Big Apple feeding, nurturing  
black and white and in-between

What makes us whole  
What gives us soul  
Pieces, pieces,  
fragments all



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#7

**Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening**

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.

*By Robert Frost*



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**#8**  
**Caged Bird**

A free bird leaps  
on the back of the wind  
and floats downstream  
till the current ends  
and dips his wing  
in the orange sun rays  
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks  
down his narrow cage  
can seldom see through  
his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and  
his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze  
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees  
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn  
and he names the sky his own



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But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams  
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream  
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.

*By Maya Angelou*



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**#9**

**A Dream within a Dream**

Take this kiss upon the brow!  
And, in parting from you now,  
Thus much let me avow-  
You are not wrong, who deem  
That my days have been a dream;  
Yet if hope has flown away  
In a night, or in a day,  
In a vision, or in none,  
Is it therefore the less gone?  
All that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar  
Of a surf-tormented shore,  
And I hold within my hand  
Grains of the golden sand-  
How few! yet how they creep  
Through my fingers to the deep,  
While I weep- while I weep!  
O God! can I not grasp  
Them with a tighter clasp?  
O God! can I not save  
One from the pitiless wave?  
Is all that we see or seem  
But a dream within a dream?



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**#10**  
**It's Up to You**

One song can spark a moment,  
One flower can wake the dream.

One tree can start a forest,  
One bird can herald spring.

One smile begins a friendship,  
One handclasp lifts a soul.

One star can guide a ship at sea,  
One word can frame the goal.

One vote can change a nation,  
One sunbeam lights a room.

One candle wipes out darkness,  
One laugh will conquer gloom.

One step must start each journey,  
One word must start each prayer.

One hope will raise our spirits,  
One touch can show you care.

One voice can speak with wisdom,  
One heart can know what's true.

One life can make the difference,  
You see, ***It's Up to You!***



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**#11**  
**Bilingual / Bilingüe**

My father liked them separate, one there,  
one here (allá y aquí), as if aware

that words might cut in two his daughter's heart  
(el corazón) and lock the alien part

to what he was—his memory, his name  
(su nombre)—with a key he could not claim.

“English outside this door, Spanish inside,”  
he said, “y basta.” But who can divide

the world, the word (mundo y palabra) from  
any child? I knew how to be dumb

and stubborn (testaruda); late, in bed,  
I hoarded secret syllables I read

until my tongue (mi lengua) learned to run  
where his stumbled. And still the heart was one.

I like to think he knew that, even when,  
proud (orgullosa) of his daughter's pen,

He stood outside mis versos, half in fear  
of words he loved but wanted not to hear.

*By Rhina P. Espaillat*



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**#12**

**Still I Rise**

You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may trod me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?  
Why are you beset with gloom?  
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells  
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high,  
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?  
Bowed head and lowered eyes?  
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,  
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?  
Don't you take it awful hard  
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines  
Diggin' in my own backyard

You may shoot me with your words,  
You may cut me with your eyes,  
You may kill me with your hatefulness,  
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?  
Does it come as a surprise





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That I dance like I've got diamonds  
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame  
I rise  
Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
I rise  
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
I rise  
I rise  
I rise.

By Maya Angelou