

The old oak tree

Richard Hill

From the village, along the long lost path,
Untrodden, unused for many years.
I let my feet pick their own path,
Walking with the utmost care.
Not looking back.

The village church clock chimes the hour.
I walk without speed.
Without saying a word.
Alongside the summer grey grass.
I make my way towards the trees.

Making my way uphill, towards the hilltop wood.
The path becomes soft and slippery,
The surface is unsound and uneven.
I don't know where I am, but I am not lost.
I get closer.

Over a rotting ruin of a style,
Into the wood. I'm still climbing.
The sun sparkles through the leaves.
I pick my way through the clumps of heather.
I walk right past an old rotted elm.

Walking where my feet are taking me.
Drawn ever closer to my goal.
I make sure of my footing
On this rotting leaf covered way.
Near now.

And there it stands.
In splendour before me.
As it's stood for generations,
Surviving everything for ever.
A great guide to the heavens.

I move closer, to touch, to feel.
The tactile bark of age.
It's lived through births and deaths,
Of very, many generations,
With more yet to come.

It has no views nor visions,
It stands proud and tall.
A symbol of wisdom, of strength,
Of healing and nobility.
Food, shelter and life.

My journey's over. I have found,
What I've been looking for.
I've been on earth for a fraction of
Its two hundred years.
Weary but contented.
