

Turning

a wish for a future

By a boyish image, your path of life is set:
A path where expectations are supposed to be met.
Along the path you follow parents from behind;
You can't see where it's leading—your future is blind.
When you learn how to see and behave and what to do,
The path becomes a road, and you are ready to go.
Parents teach looking forward, but friends point aside.
Following the path straight will bring parents' pride.
Without anyone's notice, a turning is passed by.
You look back at a girl there, with a tear in her eye.
Not knowing about side paths, you don't ask "who and why?"
What you know nothing about you can't deny.



From childhood you are guided from path to road.
Making the path wider means a heavy load.
You follow your parents, trying to look around.
But all diverted thoughts are forced to the ground.
You act like your friends for acceptance in a gang;
An improper move and you are out with a bang.
You practice your skills, seeking admiration and fame.
A failure would bring you and your family lots of shame.
Pushed forward, another turning is passed by.
You look back at the girl there with a tear in her eye.
Now you know about side paths, but that girl, "who and why?"
When no one else sees her, you start to deny.

Towards social acceptance the road must get wide.
You search for status, finding a suitable bride.
Reaching for family, money, house and car.
You haven't got time to learn who you really are.
From road to highway, life speeds up again.
Your mind gets narrow and reality insane.
Searching for habits and a cause to be kind,
The highway is straight—there is nothing to find.
Several turnings you now have passed by,
Seeing the same girl there, with a tear in her eye.
From a distance you know who, but yet not why.
The girl is coming closer, and still you deny.



The girl at the turning, now you know her so well.
She is waiting there for you; she has a story to tell.
You long to hear her and try to slow down,
But your attempts are noticed and met with a frown.
In secret you meet her, hiding within yourself.
You search for her story among books on a shelf.
The books you are finding feel both good and bad,
Yet you can't find her story, and that makes you so sad.
All missed turnings are your life passing by.
The girl there is you, with a tear in your eye.
You have looked at yourself not knowing why,
That girl is your life, and yet still you deny.

The burden you carry by others is set.
You believed in promises and all you could get,
But your life was not promised; it was hidden away.
No one knew and there was no one to say.
Now you know that a choice must be made:
The choice of your life, and you are so afraid.
Your life is speeding downhill beyond your control.
You know you have to jump to save your soul.
Ahead is another turning you shouldn't pass by.
The girl is there, now with a gleam in her eye.
She shows your true path, not another lie.
Never again you yourself will deny.

About the Poem

Gender is basic to everyone's upbringing, and yet we never think that our gender could differ from what our bodies portray. I didn't know about my true gender as a child even though I have felt the frustration emotionally all along. All the turnings I passed were the girl within me crying. If I only had followed my emotions and obeyed my inner feelings, my true gender would have revealed itself much earlier.

But even so, if I had known as a child and if I had shown my feelings, would anyone have listened? And as an adult when I first knew what was wrong, I wondered, "what would people say?" Those tears from within your soul you should never deny, and neither should anyone you share them with. It's when you share those tears that the true person you are will be revealed, and the gleam in your eye that follows will show the way.

yours sincerely Li Sam

continued
Turning
Expectations

A detailed illustration of a yellow and orange maple leaf, positioned to the right of the vertical text.