

But here there is no light,  
 Save what, from heaven is, with the breezes blown  
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.  
 I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
 But, in embalm'd darkness, guess each sweet  
 wherewith the seasonable month endows  
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;  
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;  
 Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;  
 And mid-May's eldest child,  
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

(The identification of the flowers is made with the smell of their perfumes, rather than actually seeing their blooms. The eglantine is thought to be the woods honeysuckle. If ever you have been to an old, deserted house on a summer day, and heard the droning of insects busy in domestic toil, as the only prevention of silence, you can probably appreciate much better the "murmurous haunt.")

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time  
 I have been half in love with easeful death,  
 Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,  
 To take into the air my quiet breath;  
 To ease upon the midnight with no pain,  
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
 In such an ecstasy!  
 Still wouldest thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

(John's rich imagination causes him to wonder what revelations death has. The unfolding of the curtain seems to the poet a welcomed motion. Even after his death, the Nightingale's song would be as sweet, and his ears wouldn't hear.)

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!  
 No hungry generations tread thee down;  
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown;  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
 The same that oft-times hath  
 Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

(The Nightingale's song is not a new melody, it is old, but immortal. The last two lines are two of the five lines that Kipling refers to in his well-known criticism as "the magic.")

Forlorn! they very word is like a bell  
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self!  
 Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.  
 Adieu! Adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades  
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep  
 In the next valley glades:  
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

(John sinks into sadness in knowing that his "fancy" cannot allow him to further follow the bird, and as the rhapsody of nightingale fades, and is finally redeemable only by the memory, he asks was it a "vision, or a waking dream." This, we might ask about the poem. Could the song of the Nightingale be sweeter than the ode?

## Midnight Reverie

The policeman steadily paced his beat, swinging his blackjack menacingly at the dancing shadows on the walk. The soft, rubber soles of his shoes murmured a rhythmical thud. His eyes narrowed to tiny slits as he thrust their gaze against the impenetrable blackness that nature uses as her cloak of modesty. Being a man of little imagination and relatively few celestial desires, this particular policeman fervently breathed a curse against the goddess of midnight, as a protruding limb dug deep into his swarthy cheek.

Suddenly, he stopped short and the swinging blackjack seemed, as it were, to pause stiffly in midair. Ahead of him, under the weirdly faint light of the street lamp, a little boy about six years old, leaned against the post reciting in childishly passionate tones, "To be or not to be, that is the question: Whether 'tis nobler in the mind . . ." Coming from a week bloodline, the officer clutched frantically at his vest; then, being a devout Catholic, he promptly crossed himself and entreated Divine assistance. With some effort, the awed law-promoter regained his voice and asked haltingly, "Wh-hat are you doing here?"

The child drew himself up to his full dignity and with a hint of annoyance at the interruption in his soliloquy, cocked his little head, and remarked decisively, "My dear sir, I have two very good reasons—either one alone, conclusive."

Our blue-coated friend choked on his false teeth and began to find breathing rather difficult. His throat felt dry and parched and he ran a trembling hand over his pair of flabby chins. Not having been previously introduced to Hamlet or Cyrano, he was convinced that the child before him was unfortunately possessed of evil spirits. The question was rapidly changing from "to be or not to be" to "to run or not to run."

Feeling it best to assume a kindly manner with the child, the policeman mustered as much composure as possible and asked gently, "What is your name, sonny?"

The strange phenomenon pursed his tiny lips and questioned eloquently, "What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

The policeman shook his head as if slightly addled, and began to pull nervously at his rather long nose. The child surveyed him calmly for a moment, then suggested contemptively, "I sir, if that nose were mine, would have it amputated on the spot."

The bewildered officer raised his hands in a weak gesture of despair and trotted off at a goody pace, repeating his rosary with fervor.

The little boy drew a grimy hand from his coat pocket and set two imprisoned grasshoppers at liberty. He yawned delicately and sauntered nonchalantly up the walk toward a brightly-lighted house. He could hear his father rehearsing his lines for the next play. He decided it was rather dull—having an actor for a father. When he grew up, he'd be a policeman.

## A New Incentive

By EDGAR TEAGUE

My sole ambition upon leaving school in 1950 was to return and finish my education. My plan was to take a job and save enough money to enable me to come back to school.

Then in the summer, war broke out in Korea. I like many young men, began to wonder how farfetched my plans were. For I, in the age group that had missed the last war by the stroke of fortune, was one of the first to be called up for induction into the armed forces. My thoughts at that time did not reflect patriotism. I was, as I look back upon that time, showing feelings of selfishness and ingratitude toward the service that I owed my country.

On December the fourth, 1950, I was inducted into the army of the United States. On completion of basic training, I was shipped overseas to Korea. In Korea, during my fifteen months stay, I saw people that had not lived the life of ease as I. Theirs was a hard and backward life; one that was filled with cruelty. They were a people that had been pushed around by other nations for about five centuries. These nations had deprived them of improvement in country and government.

My lesson was seeing a people that were fighting for their mere existence against nations that outnumbered them many times. This gave me a new incentive and along with it a new type of patriotism.