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Regretting Frost

I have been fortunate in a lifetime to have heard speak in person some very famous and favorite authors, whose names are known to almost all. They include Julian Huxley, Carl Sandburg, and Linus Pauling. (So now you know, if you did not before, that I am likely older than you are.)

Very first row seat for Huxley, because I could, as an early bird. Upper auditorium for Sandburg, who spoke at a graduation, and I was not graduating. Standing for Pauling in a sardine can, and it did not matter. Those were all in college days. But, I missed one in college, for whatever reason I shall never remember, and that has been my regret to this very day. He is Robert Frost.

I missed his reciting a favorite poem, so rich in meaning, that, perhaps as amends, I at least want now to share it and its simple, written beauty.

The Road Not Taken by 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.

Can we all not feel the wonder of “chance,” paths taken and not, lives shaped by all those “Ys” in the road? I have read over and over these words of Frost, for the sheer

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wonder of it all, and how well he expressed himself in only a few lines. Would that I had heard them too.

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