
Back to Santiago



I once met a man on the road
Who took a quite unusual path
Coming from the other direction
Passing by again and again
I felt a strange connection

He was not walking my way
The other way round, he was
Going into the right direction
Backwards you might say
In a sort of single procession

Just a red rucksack on his back
Traveling rather lightly, facing
The pilgrims day by day walking
Gradually towards their *destination*
Or actually moving away from it?

Because reaching your *destination*
Does not go in a horizontal line
You need time for contemplation
In the end you might find that you
Arrive where you began, right?

To come to this insight
You are guided step by step
Through all the hazards that take place
Every moment of enduring pains
During the Camino Francés

On the first day of my journey
Just recovered from a broken back
I injured my knee to a degree that
The next day I had to take a taxi
To the city of Hemingway

I met him at the bar
Showing all his trophies
Big-game shot in Africa
And stood firm in front of
His statue at the bulls' arena

It is still common to let bulls run
Through the streets of Pamplona
To grab them between the horns
I found a healer and the pleasant
Company of a firm Trump believer

In Puente la Reina by the
Ancient bridge over the river
I met my precious soulmates
From Norway and Texas
Sharing the Spirit of hierbas

We walked slowly together
Through the snow and bitter cold
Melting our souls step by step
Into a mutual layer of
Joy and sorrow to Logrono

Fellow pilgrims were passing by
Getting together at the albergues
Drinking lovely local red wines
Always asking where, when
And why did you start?

As if we are in competition
Instead of on a shared mission
Asking inner questions
Like 'Where am I coming from?'
And 'Where are we going?'

I read about finding the Sword
After challenges to endure
Fixing a cross, climbing a waterfall
To go beyond your power
To be able to serve the World

I read about a long journey
From Spain to the Pyramids
Hunting a vision to find
A Treasure that in the end
Was buried where you began

And all this wisdom was not
Able to reveal to my mind
The essence of the Path
The real Mystery
Of mankind

What it is we should be fighting for
Once we find the Sacred Sword
That distinguishes who we really are
And cuts the Path forwards
Towards a Shared Destiny

Forever I will feel connected
With my dear pilgrim friends
Wounded knees made us part ways
No time left to take the next step
Facing us and humanity

A long procession with coloured
Pointed hats hiding their faces
Sinners, from all over the world
Strolling alongside the Cathedral
What was their wrongdoing?

Carrying the Cross together
Who knows it might help
To lay aside the sorrow
Of being disconnected from
Shared Emptiness and Form

Now I was on my own
The long flat empty Meseta ahead
Where I took a rest at a Monastery
To contemplate this Emptiness
And heal the blisters on my heels

Finally, finally I arrived at Leon
With the Holy Grail hidden in
A dark little room without a sign
Maybe one day we no longer
Hide the light hidden inside

There were moments along the Way
Where I was supposed to feel a real
Sense of community, sleeping
At a church together, sharing
Our hopes, circles of obliquity

Until I came to the place
Of the man with the cancer
Digging holes in his face
And the girl from Hong Kong
Silently carrying her prison time

At the Highest point, the Iron Cross,
I left our Yellow House and my job behind
I joined a prayer in the open field
For the wellbeing of mankind
The priest sharing Host and Wine

From the Church, where the Sword
Can be found, The Path went all the way
Down to the Cathedral with the Tombe
Where the antique censer swings
Around, drowning me in obliquity

I had to continue my journey
To the End of the World
Once more, until I hit a pole
In the middle of the wavy dunes
And fell Down to the Ground

Only then did I remember
The man showing the Way
By walking every day particularly
With just a red rucksack Into
Emptiness and Back to Santiago

Steps mirroring my soul
Nowhere to arrive
Just stumble, fall, arise
Strive for a Shared Destiny
And no more Wounded Knees