

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Sonnet 50

How heavy¹ do I journey on the way,
When what I seek, my weary travel's end,
Doth teach that case and that repose² to say,
'Thus far the miles are measured from thy friend!'

5 The beast³ that bears me, tired with⁴ my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight⁵ in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider lov'd not speed being made from thee.
The bloody spur cannot provoke⁶ him on,
10 That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide,
Which heavily⁷ he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side;
For that same groan doth put this in my mind,
My grief lies onward⁸, and my joy⁹ behind.
(118 words)

¹heavy slowly, sorrowfully – ²repose rest – ³beast horse – ⁴tired with wearied by, dressed in (attired) – ⁵weight sorrow – ⁶provoke urge – ⁷heavily sorrowfully – ⁸onward ahead – ⁹joy gladness, friend