



The Three Companions

W. H. Auden

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AUTOUR D'UN POÈME DE W. H. AUDEN

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« O where are you going? » said reader to rider,
« That valley is fatal when furnaces burn,
Yonder's the midden whose odours will madden,
That gap is the grave where the tall return. »

« O do you imagine, » said fearer to farer,
« That dusk will delay on your path to the pass,
Your diligent looking discover the lacking
Your footsteps feel from granite to grass? »

« O what was that bird, » said horror to hearer,
« Did you see that shape in the twisted trees?
Behind you swiftly the figure comes softly,
The spot on your skin is a shocking disease. »

« Out of this house » - said rider to reader,
« Yours never will » - said farer to fearer,
« They're looking for you » - said hearer to horror
As he left them there, as he left them there.

W. H. Auden. *A Selection by the Author*
(1950 [1932])