

The Road to Santiago

Heather Dale

A townsman's life is even, like the dust upon the road;
Not changing with the seasons -- just with fortune's
fickle load.
But sitting on my step and bending hide and thread to
task
I saw the first man walking, I saw the first man
walking
I saw the first of many walking past.
In ones and twos they travelled, the first hints of the
wave
With hat and stick and scallop they would go to see the
grave
Of the Saint who'd lived among us... we, a town he'd
come to save
As he walked upon the road to Santiago.
With pennies in their pockets and with blisters on
their feet
They'd come within their weariness, the humble and the
meek.
For while a day could bring them wages, a month could
bring release
From the road that they were walking, this road that
they were walking
This road that led them forth in their belief.
Soon the trickle was a torrent, then the torrent was a
flood
And like Noah how they laughed amid the gadflies and
the mud
And I wondered what they shared that made such
disparate men beloved
As they walked upon the road to Santiago.
For one had come from Germany and one from here in
Spain
And one from near the Bosphorus where Constantine had
reigned
From every land they sallied forth then ventured home
again
And found the road worth walking, they found this road
worth walking
For all agreed their roads were much the same.
And so I laid my work aside -- the day's long toils
would keep.
For what was said? "A man must sow, if he intends to
reap"?
So with a laugh I set to putting blisters on my feet
As I joined them on the road to Santiago.