**Follower**

By Seamus Heaney

My father worked with a horse-plough,  
His shoulders globed like a full sail strung  
Between the shafts and the furrow.  
The horse strained at his clicking tongue.   
  
An expert. He would set the wing  
And fit the bright steel-pointed sock.  
The sod rolled over without breaking.  
At the headrig, with a single pluck   
  
Of reins, the sweating team turned round  
And back into the land. His eye  
Narrowed and angled at the ground,  
Mapping the furrow exactly.   
  
I stumbled in his hob-nailed wake,  
Fell sometimes on the polished sod;  
Sometimes he rode me on his back  
Dipping and rising to his plod.   
  
I wanted to grow up and plough,  
To close one eye, stiffen my arm.  
All I ever did was follow  
In his broad shadow round the farm.   
  
I was a nuisance, tripping, falling,  
Yapping always. But today   
It is my father who keeps stumbling  
Behind me, and will not go away.

**WALKING AWAY** - Cecil Day Lewis  
  
It is eighteen years ago, almost to the day –  
A sunny day with leaves just turning,  
The touch-lines new-ruled – since I watched you play  
Your first game of football, then, like a satellite  
Wrenched from its orbit, go drifting away  
  
Behind a scatter of boys. I can see  
You walking away from me towards the school  
With the pathos of a half-fledged thing set free  
Into a wilderness, the gait of one  
Who finds no path where the path should be.  
  
That hesitant figure, eddying away  
Like a winged seed loosened from its parent stem,  
Has something I never quite grasp to convey  
About nature’s give-and-take – the small, the scorching  
Ordeals which fire one’s irresolute clay.  
  
I have had worse partings, but none that so  
Gnaws at my mind still. Perhaps it is roughly  
Saying what God alone could perfectly show –  
How selfhood begins with a walking away,  
And love is proved in the letting go.