Why is the Poem *The Road Not Taken* Considered Deceptively Simple?

***The Road Not Taken***

Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,

And sorry I could not travel both

And be one traveler, long I stood

And looked down one as far as I could

To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,

And having perhaps the better claim,

Because it was grassy and wanted wear;

Though as for that the passing there

Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay

In leaves no step had trodden black.

Oh, I kept the first for another day!

Yet knowing how way leads on to way,

I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh

Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—

I took the one less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference.

Description of the poem:

*The Road Not Taken* is a narrative poem and begins with a picture of quietness in woods. Each line consists of 4 stanzas. The rhyme is ABAAB. Despite some lines, the general meter is iambic tetrameter. According to Wikipedia, it describes the variation of the rhyme provides *“naturalness and a feeling of thought occurring spontaneously”*.

Deceptively simple:

It is one of Frost's most popular works. Some have said that it is one of his most misunderstood poems, claiming that it is not simply a poem that champions the idea of "following your own path", but that the poem, they suggest, expresses some irony regarding that idea. Different people share different understanding to appreciate this poem. This is the core of **deceptively simple**. The poem exudes a sense of ambiguity, from title to end.

From the perspective of content, the title *The Road Not Taken* is vague. It is *The Road Not Taken* by the majority, or *The Road Not Taken* by the poet? It is not clearly explained, leaving readers massive blank spaces to imagine and understand.

From the perspective of language skill, it is seemingly simple and plain, but actually sophisticated. No complicated words or phrases used in the poem brings no burden for readers to understand the superficial meaning, seemingly using no language skills at all. On the contrary, in fact, it uses loads of skills such as metaphors, including sustained metaphors and extended metaphors. Many a simple word or phrase have multiple images at the same time. This is the ambiguity and diversity occurring in this poem, contributing to the style of “deceptively simple”

Conclusion:

As the diverse images hidden behind the seemingly simple style, *The Road Not Taken* conveys an idea of “we should be responsible for the choices we made”, which can be interpreted in different ways. As a result, the poem *The Road Not Taken* can be considered as the representative of Robert Frosts’ “Deceptively Simple Style”.