

## **The Road of Expectation**

The road rises, smooth and wide,  
Paved with rules I cannot hide.  
Each step demands a careful face,  
Each glance erases my own grace.

I walk, I bend, I mold, I fit,  
The path approves my practiced wit.  
But shadows creep where I once shone,  
A whisper tells me I'm alone.

The years press hard, the years press long,  
I trade my voice for silent song.  
The road insists on measured pace,  
I lose the curve of my own face.

I dress in forms I do not wear,  
I speak in words I cannot share.  
The smiles I paint are borrowed hues,  
My own desires begin to lose.

I climb through offices, schools, and streets,  
Through meetings, deadlines, hollow feats.  
The summit gleams, society's cheer,  
But every step strips what I hold dear.

I bend my back, I hold my tongue,  
Each expectation weighs a ton.  
I fold myself into the mold,  
And watch my spark grow pale and cold.

The road twists on, unyielding, straight,  
It does not pause, it does not wait.  
Each year I climb, each year I fall,  
The mountain mocks my every call.

I try to speak, my voice is weak,  
The world prefers I never speak.  
I trade my thoughts for quiet peace,  
And feel the edges of myself release.

The mirror shows a stranger's eyes,  
A hollow shape in practiced guise.

Each compliment, a chain disguised,  
Each nod another self revised.

The pack I carry grows with weight,  
Of titles, duties, masks of state.  
I thought I knew the road ahead,  
But every step erases thread.

The sun above is faint and far,  
A fleeting glimpse of who we are.  
I climb, I bend, I climb again,  
Yet what I was has slipped from when.

I trade my passions for applause,  
My laughter for a silent cause.  
The road demands a perfect form,  
And strips the self that once was warm.

I fall into the office chair,  
A hollow body with hollow stare.  
The papers pile, the meetings drone,  
My heartbeat fades into a stone.

The years repeat like grinding wheels,  
Each step a loss, each loss reveals  
How slowly I dissolve from view,  
The world's designs replace what's true.

I smile, I nod, I play my part,  
Yet feel the pieces leave my heart.  
The road goes upward, long and cruel,  
It swallows me with its quiet rule.

The mirror laughs, the mirror mocks,  
The clothes I wear are gilded locks.  
I try to reach the distant light,  
But find my soul dissolved in night.

The road loops back through birthdays, jobs,  
Through obligations, social mobs.  
I try to rest, the mountain waits,  
Its summit built of hollow fates.

The voice I held grows thin and weak,  
It whispers truths I cannot speak.

The world applauds my quiet form,  
While I erode beneath the norm.

The years pile high like jagged stone,  
Each success weighs me to the bone.  
I climb, I bend, I climb, I fall,  
The road demands the self of all.

The light above is distant, cold,  
A promise of a self retold.  
Yet every step I climb in vain,  
And feel my own dissolve like rain.

The road goes upward, steep and bare,  
I lose myself within its care.  
The traveler fades, the mask remains,  
Society's echo courses veins.

No cry, no spark, no true delight,  
Just endless climbing toward the light.  
I walk, I fall, I walk, I bend,  
And vanish slowly at the end.