



My Shadow- by Robert Louis Stevenson

**I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.**

Explanation: In these lines, the boy is telling us that he has a shadow which looks similar to him. He is telling us that shadow is also useful to us if we think its uses. He also tells us that he is very much similar, from head to the heel of the boy and jumps into his bed before him. The feeling of his shadow following him excites him a lot.

**The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an India-rubber ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.**

Explanation: One unusual thing is what the boy notices. The size of the shadow differs. He says that sometimes it grows tall and the other times, it gets small in size. It is not like the normal kids who grow at a normal pace. The shadow getting bigger and smaller excites the boy too. It is because he has not seen anything like this before. This is when he realizes that the shadow is not like other children. It does not have normal behaviour.

**He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!**

Explanation: The boy thinks the shadow doesn't know how normal children play, the boy says that the shadow only knows how to play tricks. When the boy is playing, the shadow is always nearby. The boy even assumes that because the shadow is a coward, it does not leave him ever. Moreover, because the shadow stays behind and always follows him where ever he goes.

**One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.**

Explanation: In these lines, boy wants to tell us about the incidence of one morning .The boy gets up early in the morning one day, before sunrise. The morning is beautiful and dewy and he can see the dew on every leaf. The shadow didn't follow, the boy is excited as the shadow did not follow him for the first time. He assumes that the shadow is so lazy that it did not get up in the morning and is still sleeping in bed. He thinks so because the shadow always jumps into bed with him so he assumes it is still asleep.

I.Meanings:

1. shadow: a dark shape formed when something stops light from passing through
2. heels: the back part of the foot
3. shoot: discharge
4. sort: a category of things
5. notion: belief about something
6. coward: a person who is not brave
7. shame: disgrace
8. ought: have to/ must
9. early: before the expected time
10. asleep: into a state of sleep
11. sticks: a thin piece of wood
12. always: at all times; on all occasions
13. proper: suitable or appropriate
14. lazy: unwilling to work
15. stays: remain in the same place
16. arrant: something bad
17. buttercup: a plant which has shiny yellow flowers

Prepared by: Vijayalaxmi M