

THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

More Than Meets the Eye

Poems and people have a lot in common, for outward appearances can be very deceiving. Take your average nursery rhyme, for example. Let's assume some deeper meanings and see what we get:

There was an old woman who lived in a shoe;
She had so many responsibilities, she didn't know what to do.
So, she gave each a little attention and found
She got angry and tossed the whole bunch on the ground.

Of course, to "live in a shoe" might mean she traveled a lot, so...

There was an old woman who traveled around
With her mind full of rich new inventions;
But she never got quite enough time to expound
And "poof" went her lovely intentions.

Or, what about Jack Horner?

He kept to himself, while he tasted the "fruits of his labor."
Without someone else's opinion to hear, Jack found he was never
a failure.

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And...

Humpty Dumpty had ridden the fence
for such a long time, it was dashing;
But, now, to take sides on an issue at hand,
he found the experience smashing.

Of course, there are as many different interpretations of any poem you choose as there are people doing the interpreting, and maybe they don't have a deeper meaning...maybe they should be taken at face value. But the problem is that one can't make this (or any other) assumption—and know it to be true—without first checking with the author. Anything else is an exercise in futility...maybe fun for the interpreter and enjoyable to the reader or listener, but possibly detrimental to the original intent of the poem.

And, that's true for people, too; for sometimes we ignore them as being childish or judge their words without understanding all the things that went into that *composition*. Maybe we haven't taken a close enough look...but EVEN IF WE HAVE, there is still only one person who knows the truth about this creation...and that's the Author.

It's easy to look very quickly at things and think they have no
deeper meaning,

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To toss them aside, with a cursory glance and to judge them as
childishly seeming.

But nothing's so simple, it can't be complex; and things that
sometimes confuse

Have a way of becoming quite simple, again, if your heart and your mind
you will choose.

The saying has such a familiar old ring; but I can't really think
of another:

When dealing with people or rhymes and such things, you can't judge
a book by its cover.

(March 10, 1980)