

KIND OF AN ODE TO DUTY

Ogden Nash

Oh Duty,
Why hast thou not the visage of a sweetie or a cutie?
Why glitter thy spectacles so ominously?
Why art thou clad so abominously?
Why art thou so different from Venus
And why do thou and I have so few interests mutually in common
 between us?
Why art thou fifty per cent martyr
And fifty-one per cent Tartar?

Why is it thy unfortunate wont
To try to attract people by calling on them either to leave undone
 the deeds they like, or to do the deeds they don't?
Why art thou so like an April post-mortem
Or something that died in the ortumn?
Above all, why dost thou continue to hound me?
Why art thou always albatrossly hanging around me?

Thou so ubiquitous,
And I so iniquitous
I seem to be the one person in the world thou art perpetually
 preaching at or to who;
Whatever looks like fun, there art thou standing between me and it
 calling yoo-hoo
O Duty, Duty!
How noble a man should I be hadst thou the visage of a sweetie or
 a cutie!
But as it is thou art so much forbiddinger than a Wodehouse hero's
 forbiddingest aunt
That in the words of the poet, When Duty whispers low, thou must
This erstwhile youth replies, I just can't.