

The Bridge Builder



An old man,
going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening,
cold and gray,
To a chasm, vast,
and deep, and wide,
Through which was
flowing a sullen tide.

The old man crossed
in the twilight dim;
The sullen stream had
no fear for him;
But he turned, when
safe on the other side,
And built a bridge to
span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim, near,
"You are wasting strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day;
You never again will pass this way;
You've crossed the chasm, deep and wide-
Why build you this bridge at the evening tide?"

The builder lifted his old gray head:
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
"There followeth after me today,
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.

This chasm, that has been naught to me,
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him."

by Will Allen Dromgoole, circa 1900



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