

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

1522-1560



The Regrets, Sonnet 31 (Les Regrets, “Heureux qui, comme Ulysse”)

Happy the man who, like Ulysses, has traveled well,
Or like that man who conquered the fleece,
And has then returned, full of experience and wisdom,
To live among his kinfolk the rest of his life!

5 When, alas, will I again see smoke rising
From the chimney of my little village and in what season
Will I see the enclosed field of my poor house,
Which to me is a province and much more still?

10 The home my ancestors built pleases me more
Than the grandiose facades of Roman palaces,
Fine slate pleases me more than hard marble,

My Gallic Loire more than the Latin Tiber,
My little Liré more than the Palatine hill,
And more than sea air, the sweetness of Anjou.

—Translated from the Middle French by Richard Helgerson

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