

The Kitchen Chimney

Builder, in building the little house,
In every way you may please yourself;
But please please me in the kitchen chimney:
Don't build me a chimney upon a shelf.

However far you must go for bricks,
Whatever they cost a-piece or a pound,
But me enough for a full-length chimney,
And build the chimney clear from the ground.

It's not that I'm greatly afraid of fire,
But I never heard of a house that throve
(And I know of one that didn't thrive)
Where the chimney started above the stove.

And I dread the ominous stain of tar
That there always is on the papered walls,
And the smell of fire drowned in rain
That there always is when the chimney's false.

A shelf's for a clock or vase or picture,
But I don't see why it should have to bear
A chimney that only would serve to remind me
Of castles I used to build in air.

About the Author

Robert Frost (1874-1963) was born in San Francisco, California. His father William Frost, a journalist and an ardent Democrat, died when Frost was about eleven years old. His Scottish mother, the former Isabelle Moody, resumed her career as a schoolteacher to support her family. The family lived in Lawrence, Massachusetts, with Frost's paternal grandfather, Wil...

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