

## **The Eagle Scout Trail**

The Eagle Scout, whose notable achievement  
We honor here tonight, has just completed  
A long, long Trail.  
He started months ago as a Tenderfoot, the  
Gateway to the Trail, With Scout Good Turns  
And Slogan, "Be Prepared."

Then Second Class and First, with the outdoor life,  
The open roads with nights beneath the stars,  
And service to community and troop.  
Now pinnacles of Star and Life were scaled,  
On one hand learning skills and pioneering,  
While following the daily Scout ideals.  
Of service in the home, the church, the school -  
Not merely winning many merit badges,  
But living out the Scout Oath and Law.

And yet the Eagle Scout who stands before us  
Has not attained the summit. No, instead he's  
Really just embarking on a trail much greater -  
That of Scouting Leadership, and, with the  
Spirit of a true American, is ready to defend  
Our Way of Life.

## **An Eagle Scout - So What?**

"An Eagle Scout - so what?" a chance acquaintance asked, not really meaning to belittle something strong and good.

"So what?" you ask, an earnest man replied. "Let me tell you some of the "so what." First a boy must be a Scout - and that takes something pretty fine inside of him. He doesn't get to be a Scout by accident. He has chosen that path.

"That simple choosing means that he wants to count, with purposes, people and worthwhile causes, to do his share to advance common good. No, don't go. You asked 'so what?' - Now hear me out.

"If he is one in twenty, he'll climb to be a First Class Scout. That's no cinch. He'll get there by always keeping going. Oh, you understand something of what a First Class Scout is? Good.

"Of course, it's more than what you do. It's what you are. One out of every ten or so who persevere to First Class goes to Star.

"Oh, you have to go? You can't wait to hear? I'm sorry, for I'd like for you to really understand that an Eagle Scout is truly something special, worth all the pride that we can have and show him.

I'm grateful for this incident in which my thoughtless friend spoke those words that aroused me so: "An Eagle Scout - So What?"

Someday I hope to talk to him again. Perhaps he'll tell me then that he, too, feels a touch of pride for this tall-grown boy with purposes in his stride, this Eagle Scout.

## **A Fond Mother or Fond Parents**

A fond mother watches her boy here he stands,  
Apart from his comrades tonight,  
As they place on his camp-battered tunic a badge  
An Eagle, the emblem of right.

It seems just a few short months have passed  
Since he joined with the youngster next door.  
How proud he was then of his new Scout pin  
As he told her the message it bore.

But the years have gone as he struggled along  
To learn what the Scout Law's about.  
He practiced them daily, the Oath and Law  
Until now he's an Eagle Scout.

You may smile in your worldly old wisdom at this  
And say "Why, it's only a pin?"  
But I tell you no honors he'll gain as a man  
Will mean just as much to him.

The red, white, and blue of the ribbon you see  
Are the symbols of honor and truth.  
He learned how to value those fine attributes  
In the glorious days of his youth.

And the outflinging wings of that Eagle that rests  
On the breast of this knight of today,  
Are the things that will lift him above petty deeds  
And guide him along the right way.

Yes, it's only a pin, just an Eagle Scout badge,  
But the heart that's beneath it beats true,  
And will throb to the last for the things which are good.  
A lesson for me - and for you.

## **The Trail of the Eagle**

Today our Eagle has shown us all  
Standing here, clean-cut and tall;  
This is the trail the Scouts shall know  
Where knightly qualities thrive and grow.

The trail of honor and truth and worth.  
The strength that springs from the good brown earth.  
The trail that Scouts in the seeking blaze  
Through the toughest tangle, in the deepest maze.

'Till out of boyhood the Scout comes straight  
To manhood's splendor and high estate.

## **The Push**

The Eagle gently coaxed her offspring toward the edge of the nest. Her heart quivered with conflicting emotions as she felt their resistance to her persistent nudging. “Why does the thrill of soaring have to begin with the fear of falling?” she thought. This ageless question was still unanswered for her.

As in the tradition of the species, her nest was located high on the shelf of a sheer rock face. Below there was nothing but air to support the wings of each child. “Is it possible that this time it will not work?” she thought. Despite her fears, the Eagle knew it was time. Her parental mission was all but complete. There remained one final task – the push.

The Eagle drew courage from an innate wisdom. Until her children discovered their wings, there was no purpose for their lives. Until they learned how to soar, they would fail to understand their privilege it was to have been born an EAGLE. The push was the greatest gift she had to offer. It was her supreme act of love. And so, one by one, she pushed them; and how they flew!

David M<sup>c</sup>Nally

June 1990

## **The Law of Life**

The tree that never had to fight  
For sun and sky and air and light,  
That stood out in the open plain  
And always got its share of rain,  
    Never became a forest king,  
But lived and died a scrubby thing.  
The man who never had to toil  
Who never had to win his share  
    Of sun sky and light and air,  
    Never became a manly man,  
    But lived and died as he began.  
Good timber does not grow in ease.  
The stronger wind, the tougher trees,  
    The farther sky, the greater length,  
The more the storm, the more the strength,  
By sun and cold, by rain and snows,  
In tree or man, good timber grows.

### **WHEN GOD MADE THE OYSTER...**

He guaranteed him absolute economic and social security.

He built the oyster a house, a shell to protect him from his enemies.

When hungry, the oyster simply opens his shell and food rushes in for him.

He has no worries.

He doesn't fight anybody.

He's not going anywhere.

### **BUT, WHEN GOD MADE THE EAGLE...**

He gave him the sky as domain.

The eagle then nested on the highest crag, where the storms threaten every day.

For food he flies through miles of rain, snow, sleet and wind.

He screams his defiance at the elements and goes about his own business, building his own life.

When he's aroused,

He's a noteworthy foe to his enemies.

As you start down the path of the Eagle Scout, I hope you will remember to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law, and remember that God has made you an EAGLE, not an OYSTER.