

RICHARD WILBUR

Out Here

Strangers might wonder why
That big snow shovel's leaning
Against the house in July.
Has it some secret meaning?

It means at least to say
That, here, we needn't be neat
About putting things away,
As on some suburban street.

What's more, by leaning there
The shovel seems to express
With its rough and ready air
A boast of ruggedness.

If a stranger said in sport
"I see you're prepared for snow,"
Our shovel might retort
"Out here you never know."

Born in 1921, **Richard Wilbur** is America's most-honored living poet. His translations of Moliere, Racine, Corneille, are the gold standard for French comedy on the stage. He has received the Bollingen Prize both for his translations and for his own poetry. Twice he has received the Putlitzer Prize. Twice, served as Poet Laureate or Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress. He lives in Cummington, MA, where he plays tennis and teaches at Amherst.