

Reading: "The Low Road" by Marge Piercy

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Justice Roberts' family has asked me to read from a poem by the American writer, feminist, and political activist, Marge Piercy. It is my honor to do so today.

Nine months ago, Justice Roberts took me under her wing when I applied for a vacancy on the Oregon Court of Appeals. I am told that I was the last lawyer whom Justice Roberts helped to shepherd on the road to the bench. I am fortunate and touched that she put considerable effort and time into helping me. I appreciate her valuable and generous help as a teacher, advisor, cheerleader, and advocate, all rolled into one.

The selected poem – "The Low Road" – is a fitting one because it reflects Justice Roberts' life-long efforts to move us together and forward. I am grateful for her generosity and for her deep understanding of the power of "we."

"The Low Road" by Marge Piercy (abridged)

*Alone, you can fight, you can refuse, you can take what revenge you can but they roll over you.
But two people fighting back to back can cut through a mob, a snake-dancing file can break a
cordon, an army can meet an army. Two people can keep each other sane, can give support,
conviction, love, massage, hope, sex.*

Three people are a delegation, a committee, a wedge.

With four you can play bridge and start an organization.

*With six you can rent a whole house, eat pie for dinner with no seconds, and hold a fund
raising party.*

A dozen makes a demonstration.

A hundred fill a hall.

A thousand have solidarity and your own newsletter;

ten thousand, power and your own paper;

a hundred thousand, your own media;

ten million, your own country.

*It goes on one at a time, it starts when you care to act, it starts when you do it again after they
said no, it starts when you say "We" and know who you mean, and each day you mean one
more.*