

“Ready?” Poodle asked. “Let’s do it.”
He was like that—fearless, like Poodle Pan.

He stepped into the portal,
and there was a low yellow glow,
and a whirrmrr, and a snap, crackle, and pop.

The monsters looked at each other, blinked twice,
took a deep breath, and jumped through the portal.

BOOM! They were in.
They stuck the landing.

Everyone had made it. It had not hurt.

The portal-world was bright,
a yellow fall morning, a dust of frost—just right.

They had crossed into the poem, a world.

Before them one road diverged into two,
and the yellow birches shimmied in a cool wind
that wove through the wood.



“What do we do?” asked What?,
looking at the two roads.

“It’s a choice,” said Poodle.
“We can’t choose both. The right road is good,
and no one has trodden it black,
but the left road is grassy; it wants wear.”

They crept to the left and looked
at that road, which few had traveled on.
New grass grew through the old grooves,
cool and comfy to their toes.
No one had walked there for a long time.



“Grbrkr, lookr, grkbr,” said Burgull,
who had moved close to the yellow branches
at the right side of the page.
Or stage. Or wood.

Dickinson hummed over to see.
Burgull was looking, with all of his consonants,
at a long yellow branch that hung low
near the left road, like an ancient painting,
and the yellow leaves aglow
against the purple shade below,
and the purple and the yellow
were like a dream of happiness.

They could have stood there forever.

Everyone looked; no one spoke.

