



“A Charge to Keep?”OMG!

I think George W. Bush's knowledge of, and his own interpretation of his favorite painting would have been a great litmus test of his competency, a test he surely would have failed. If only we'd known! If ONLY! <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2008/1/26/181556/320/694/443737>

This is the scariest thing I have EVER heard!

Wow. I keep saying this, even tho I hate repeating myself, but just when I think I have heard the most ridiculous fact about this cheerleading frat rat we have in charge, I learn YET ANOTHER bit of disturbing information concerning the way this freak of nature thinks and makes decisions and what he feels is important, and how he empathizes with what he holds dear to his heart(lessness)! So he hung this painting in the Oval Office as soon as he became “president”, where he can look at it every day, (not counting the record making 879 days he has taken for vacations as of March 4, 2008) so if he's anything like me (please kill me if I'm ANYTHING like him!) he doesn't like this painting because it's pretty but because he apparently identifies with the rider and has created an imaginary scenario that he uses as a guide for life. It is just so fitting and proper that what he is really looking at is a horse thief trying to escape a lynch mob. It almost gives me hope for the future but then the horse thief manages to get away in the story and doesn't have to suffer the consequences of his evil deeds. Sigh.

Eery Grim Ogre



George Bush's favorite painting, *Slate* reports, is W.H.D. Koerner's *A Charge to Keep*, and he identifies with the lead horseman (whom he says he resembles). In his autobiography he wrote:

I thought I would share with you a recent bit of Texas history which epitomizes our mission. When you come into my office, please take a look at the beautiful painting of a horseman determinedly charging up what appears to be a steep and rough trail. This is us. What adds complete life to the painting for me is the message of Charles Wesley that we serve One greater than ourselves.

But as Jacob Weisberg writes in his new book *The Bush Tragedy*, the president is reading more into the work than is really there:

He came to believe that the picture depicted the circuit-riders who spread Methodism across the Alleghenies in the nineteenth century. In other words, the cowboy who looked like Bush was a missionary of his own denomination.

Only that is not the title, message, or meaning of the painting. The artist, W.H.D. Koerner, executed it to illustrate a Western short story entitled “The Slipper Tongue,” published in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1916. The story is about a smooth-talking horse thief who is caught, and then escapes a lynch mob in the Sand Hills of Nebraska. The illustration depicts the thief fleeing his captors. In the magazine, the illustration bears the caption: “Had His Start Been Fifteen Minutes Longer He Would Not Have Been Caught.”



MY favorite painting happens to be [The Lady of Shalott](#) by Waterhouse, based on the poem by Tennyson. I discovered the painting after discovering the song by [Loreena McKennitt](#) of the same name, the lyrics of which are pretty much the same as the poem with a few verses left out. I've declared her song the most beautiful song in the world and I find the painting just as wonderful. I didn't try to MAKE UP a history to fit some agenda I wanted to promote and anyway, I accept both the painting and the poem as a single entity with no possible way that it can be improved upon. I have always assumed that you can't get away with just deliberately recreating history, such as calling the Mona Lisa "Susie Q" and pretending she was a rock star! Bush's all encompassing plan to create his own version of reality in every aspect and every nuance of his daily life is overwhelmingly [Orwellian](#) to the point of being so unbelievably bizarre that I suspect no one can fathom it being real. This is really scary. Damn scary. Damn frightfully real life scary. Maybe I should just take Bush's advice and go shopping.

Eery Grim Ogre

Music by Loreena McKennitt
Lyrics by Alfred Lord Tennyson
(1843)

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the
sky;
And thro' the field the road run by
To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four grey walls, and four grey
towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

Only reapers, reaping early,
In among the beared barley
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly;
Down to tower'd Camelot;
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers 'tis the fairy
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.'

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may
be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care heat she,
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

And moving through a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and
two.
She hath no loyal Knight and true,
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot;
Or when the Moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed.
'I am half sick of shadows,' said
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley
sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the
leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight
glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse
trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
'Tirra lirra,' by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the
room,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks
complaining.
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And around about the prow she
wrote
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance -
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she
lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and Burgher, Lord and Dame,
And around the prow they read her
name,
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

Who is this? And what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for
fear,
All the Knights at Camelot;
But Lancelot mused a little space
He said, 'she has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.'

L.M.: Vocals, Keyboards
BRIAN HUGHES: Balalaika, Guitar
TOM HAZLETT: Bass
ANNE BOURNE: Cello
HUGH MARSH: Fiddle