



# Spring in the Wind-Bag

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Epic Threads

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## Artist's Statement

Spring in the Wind-Bag engages the Homeric concept of *nostos* through a focused reinterpretation of Book 10 of the *Odyssey*, in which Aeolus binds the winds in a leather bag to secure Odysseus' passage home. In Homer's narrative, containment promises arrival, yet the premature release of the winds produces further wandering. This tension between preservation and dispersal provides the structural foundation of the poem: each major image holds something in suspension, whether spring in the tin, winds in the bag, memory in the body, or return in the imagined direction of Ithaca.

The sealed tin in the poem functions as a contemporary analogue to Aeolus' wind-bag. As long as it remains closed, spring is held in suspension. Release implies movement, but not necessarily return. The poem does not imitate epic diction or scale. Instead, it translates epic temporality into lyric form. References to Aeolus, Ithaca, and the sea situate the work within Homeric geography, while the image of Penelope's weaving reframes delay as a meaningful state rather than a failure of completion. Her daily act of weaving and undoing offers a quieter model of endurance, one based not on conquest, but on repetition, waiting, and the refusal of premature closure.

In the *Odyssey*, homecoming is repeatedly deferred, yet the possibility of arrival sustains narrative momentum. This poem explores that same dynamic at an intimate level. By relocating *nostos* into an everyday object, it suggests that epic structures continue to shape modern experiences of longing, memory, and expectation. The wandering word becomes a quiet counterpart to the wandering hero. Return is imagined not as conquest, but as a gradual lowering of sail into light.

## Spring in the Wind-Bag

The cashier says  
tin never expires.  
Sealed,  
spring cannot scatter,  
like winds Aeolus sealed  
in leather  
for a ship almost touching home.<sup>1</sup>

If one day you find  
dandelion down  
at the hem of your clothes,  
know it is me  
loosening perhaps from perhaps,  
letting them slip  
over darkened sea,  
angling toward Ithaca  
without yet making land.

Not an ending.  
Not a cry.  
Only a pause,  
short-lived  
as a day's weaving,  
undone  
before morning.<sup>2</sup>

May frost on your windowsill  
weigh less than memory.  
May every wandering word  
lower its sail  
and listen for shore.

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<sup>1</sup>In Book 10 of the *Odyssey*, Aeolus gives Odysseus a leather bag holding the winds; when it is opened too soon, Odysseus is blown away from Ithaca again.

<sup>2</sup>Penelope delays remarriage by weaving a shroud by day and secretly undoing it by night.

## References

Homer. *The Odyssey*. Translated by Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin Classics, 1996.