



Spiritual Poetry Meetup

Poems to take home with you

January 16, 2021

Blessing the Boats – Lucille Clifton

Buoyancy – Jalaluddin Rumi

Already Given – Wendell Berry

Bald Eagle – Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

I Am You – Jalaluddin Rumi

Old Man Passing Through a Doorway – Albert Huffstickler

*Those Who Love the Friend Find Peace in Both Worlds –
Yunus Emre*

*Oh What Is That Beautiful Thing That Just Happened? –
Mary Oliver*

Late Ripeness – Czeslaw Milosz



The next Spiritual Poetry Meetup will be Saturday, February 20, 2021



blessing the boats

By [Lucille Clifton](#)

(at St. Mary's)

may the tide
that is entering even now
the lip of our understanding
carry you out
beyond the face of fear
may you kiss
the wind then turn from it
certain that it will
love your back may you
open your eyes to water
water waving forever
and may you in your innocence
sail through this to that

BUOYANCY

Jalaluddin Rumi

Love has taken away my practices
and filled me with poetry.

I tried to keep quietly repeating,
No strength but yours,
but I couldn't.

I had to clap and sing.
I used to be respectable and chaste and stable,
but who can stand in this strong wind
and remember those things?

A mountain keeps an echo deep inside itself.
That's how I hold your voice.

I am scrap wood thrown in your fire,
and quickly reduced to smoke.

I saw you and became empty.
This emptiness, more beautiful than existence,
it obliterates existence, and yet when it comes,
existence thrives and creates more existence.

The sky is blue. The world is a blind man
squatting on the road.

But whomever sees your emptiness
sees beyond blue and beyond the blind man.

A great soul hides, like Muhammad, or Jesus,
moving through a crowd in a city where no one knows him.

To praise is to praise
how one surrenders to the emptiness.

To praise the sun is to praise your own eyes.
Praise, the ocean. What we say, a little ship.

So the sea-journey goes on, and who knows where?
Just to be held by the ocean is the best luck we could have.
It's a total waking up.

Why should we grieve that we've been sleeping?
It doesn't matter how long we have been unconscious.

We're groggy, but let the guilt go.
Feel the motions of tenderness around you,
the buoyancy.



Already Given

I was your rebellious son,
do you remember? Sometimes
I wonder if you do remember,
so complete has your forgiveness been.

So complete has your forgiveness been
I wonder sometimes if it did not
precede my wrong, and I erred,
safe found, within your love,

prepared ahead of me, the way home,
or my bed at night, so that almost
I should forgive you, who perhaps
foresaw the worst that I might do,

and forgave before I could act,
causing me to smile now, looking back,
to see how paltry was my worst,
compared to your forgiveness of it

already given. And this, then,
is the vision of that Heaven of which
we have heard, where those who love
each other have forgiven each other,

where, for that, the leaves are green,
the light a music in the air,
and all is unentangled,
and all is undismayed.

~ Wendell Berry

<https://beautywelove.blogspot.com/2010/05/to-my-mother.html>



Bald Eagle

In less than ten seconds
I fell in love with the eagle
before it rounded the corner
and disappeared.

Sometimes,
it's easier to love
that which moves quickly
through our lives.

Harder to love
what stays long enough
to disappoint, to hurt, to betray—
harder to feel disenchanted
and love anyway.

I've seen an eagle
carry prey that weighs
more than it does.

Makes me want to believe
I, too, can carry more—
like a love bigger than I am.
Like forgiveness beyond
what my thoughts can think.
Like willingness to keep loving
long after I'd rather rest my wings.

Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer
<https://ahundredfallingveils.com/2020/12/10/bald-eagle/>



I Am You

I am you
Not Muslim, Christian or Jew,
Not Zoroastrian, Zen Buddhist or Hindu

I am you

Not any religion that you may know
Not any cult, creed or convictions, to name a few.
Not from the east or the west,
Not from water or the earth,
Not from this world or the next

I am you

Not from Adam, Eve or any story that you may perceive.
My place is placeless,
My trace is traceless,
I live in the world of oneness.

I am you

Together in the vacuum of space,
In every particle of your breath.
Together in a world of total unity and harmony.

Yes, I am you

I see the two worlds as one,
Search for one and only know oneness.
I am the breath of eternal love inside of you,
The breath that you hear and sounds like whooo,
I am the spirit that resides inside of you.

Yes I am you
Not Muslim, Christian or Jew,
Not Zoroastrian, Zen Buddhist or Hindu

OLD MAN PASSING THROUGH A DOORWAY

I'm looking for that place inside you
where everything passes through you,
where you're like the rain,
giving and receiving at the same time
as you pass on to new identities—
that place where fate and destiny are one
and nothing is required.

I'm looking for that moment's stillness
where everything becomes crystal clear
and you see yourself as from a distant hill
or a star, everything in perspective,
the good and the bad balanced and the same,
all the moments of your life leading to this moment,
then spreading out from it in perfect order,
no questions asked.

I'm looking for that time that is all time
condensed into a single moment
then spreading out in all directions infinitely
like a stone dropped into the water.
I'm searching my mortality from end to end
for just that place, having sought it in the stars too long.

I watch an old man hobble to the door bent sideways,
each step an infinity,
then pause in the doorway to gaze into the next room,
a common place but a wonder to him.

I would move into each moment of my life
as totally engrossed as he is,
bending to the weight of the planet then flowing with it.
Watching this old man pass through a doorway,
I am all men passing into the next moment.
The light from the doorway haloes the bent head
and for this moment, I've found what I am seeking.

—Albert Huffstickler, from *Walking Wounded*



Those Who Love the Friend Find Peace in Both Worlds

That by which our hearts are held,
whole worlds love it too.
I can't deny the truth --
many ways lead to the One.

Those whom the Beloved loves,
we must also love.
If someone is a friend to the Friend,
how can we afford not to be friends?

If you would be a lover,
befriend him who loves your Friend;
and if you cannot,
don't call yourself a friend of mine.

Whomever you tend to despise,
hold dear instead.
Don't belittle others, respect them.
This is where the path leads.

If your heart is filled with love,
your way is sacrifice.
Through sacrifice you will find your place
in the ranks of Love.

Hearts which truly love the Truth,
Truth will open a door wide.
Dismantle the house of selfishness.
Put away your self-regard.

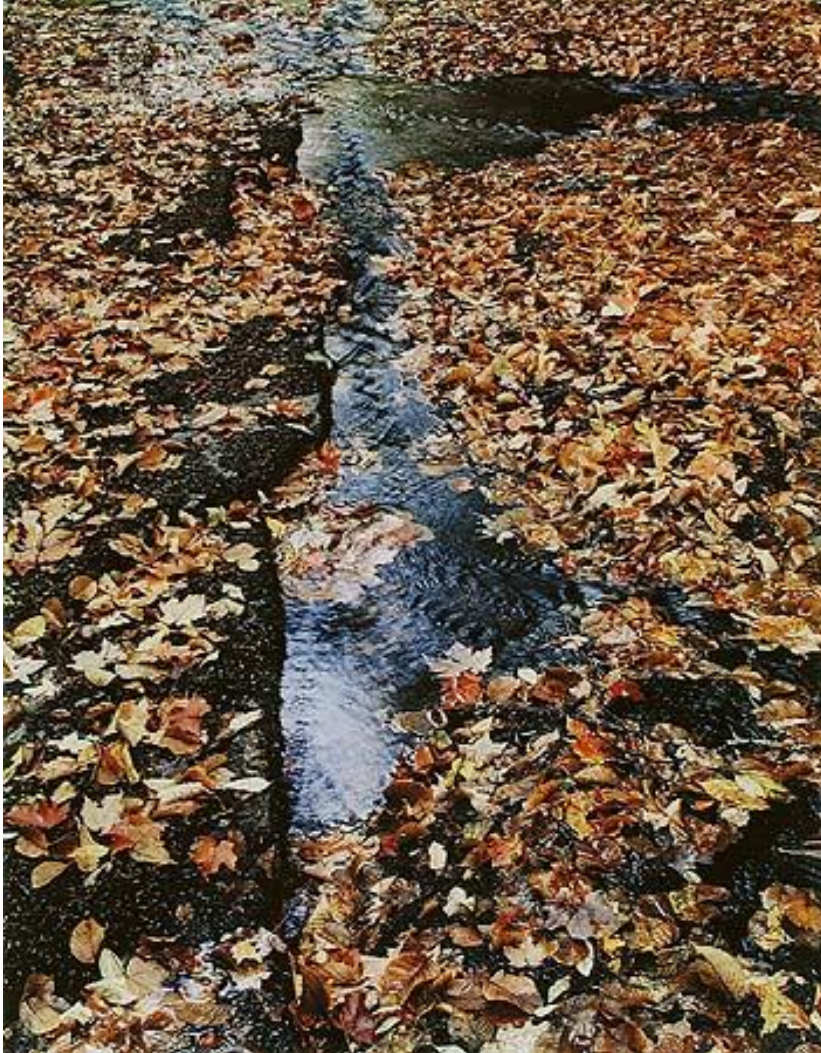
High and low, enemy, neighbor,
the Friend serves them all.
Whoever wants to spread this word
must first go out of his home.

This counsel that Yunus gives
is like buried gold.
Those who love the Friend
find peace in both worlds.

By Yunus Emre
(1238 - 1320)

Translated by Kabir Helminski and Refik Algan

oh what is that beautiful thing that just happened?



**At Blackwater Pond
the tossed waters have settled
after a night of rain.**

**I dip my cupped hands. I drink
a long time. It tastes**

**like stone, leaves, fire. It falls cold
into my body, waking the bones. I
hear them**

**deep inside me, whispering
*oh what is that beautiful thing
that just happened?***

**~ Mary Oliver
photo by Eliot Porter**



Late Ripeness

By Czeslaw Milosz

Translated by Robert Hass and Czeslaw Milosz (art by René Magritte)

Not soon, as late as the approach of my ninetieth year,
I felt a door opening in me and I entered
the clarity of early morning.

One after another my former lives were departing,
like ships, together with their sorrow.

And the countries, cities, gardens, the bays of seas
assigned to my brush came closer,
ready now to be described better than they were before.

I was not separated from people,
grief and pity joined us.
We forget—I kept saying—that we are all children of the King.

For where we come from there is no division
into Yes and No, into is, was, and will be.

We were miserable, we used no more than a hundredth part
of the gift we received for our long journey.

Moments from yesterday and from centuries ago—
a sword blow, the painting of eyelashes before a mirror
of polished metal, a lethal musket shot, a caravel
staving its hull against a reef—they dwell in us,
waiting for a fulfillment.

I knew, always, that I would be a worker in the vineyard,
as are all men and women living at the same time,
whether they are aware of it or not.