

Rumi
The Guest House

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

The Summer Day
Mary Oliver

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?

This grasshopper, I mean-
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down-
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.

Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.

I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,

how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.

Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?

Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?

The Invitation

by **Oriah Mountain Dreamer** (Native American Elder)

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living.
I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are.
I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dreams, for the adventure of
being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring on your moon.
I want to know if you have touched the center of your sorrow, if you have been opened by life's
betrayals or have become shriveled and closed from fear of further pain.

I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own, without moving to hide it or fade it or
fix it.

I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own, if you can dance with wildness and let
the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, be
realistic, or to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you're telling me is true.
I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself; if you can bare the accusation
of betrayal and not betray your own soul.

I want to know if you can be faithful and therefore be trustworthy.

I want to know if you can see beauty even when it is not pretty everyday, and if you can source
your life from God's presence.

I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine, and still stand on the edge of a lake
and shout to the silver of the full moon, "Yes!"

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have.

I want to know if you can get up after the night of grief and despair,
weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done for the children.

It doesn't interest me who you are, how you came to be here.
I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what
sustains you from the inside when all else fades away.
I want to know if you can be alone with yourself, and if you truly like the company you keep in
the empty moments.