



3 Readings for the
End of Day &
Ceremony for Wartime

Readings for the End of Day

Dreams by Mary Oliver

All night
the dark buds of dreams
open
richly.

In the center
of every petal
is a letter,
and you imagine

if you could only remember
and string them all together
they would spell the answer.
It is a long night,

and not an easy one —
you have so many branches,
and there are diversions —
birds that come and go,

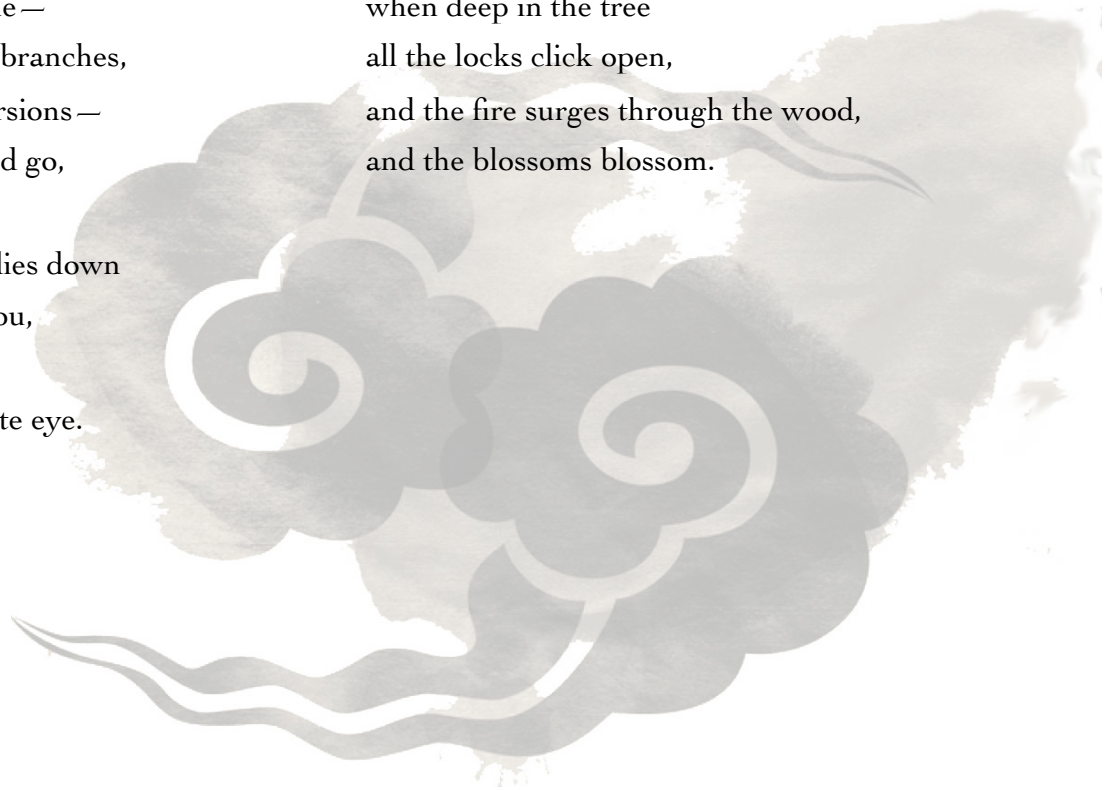
the black fox that lies down
to sleep beneath you,
the moon staring
with her bone-white eye.

Finally, you have spent
all the energy you can
and you drag from the ground
the muddy skirts of your roots

and leap awake
with two or three syllables
like water in your mouth
and a sense

of loss — a memory
not yet of a word,
certainly not yet the answer —
only how it feels

when deep in the tree
all the locks click open,
and the fire surges through the wood,
and the blossoms blossom.



Sunset by Rainer Maria Rilke

Slowly the west reaches for clothes of new colors
which it passes to a row of ancient trees.
You look, and soon these two worlds both leave you,
one part climbs toward heaven, one sinks to earth,

leaving you, not really belonging to either,
not so hopelessly dark as that house that is silent,
not so unswervingly given to the eternal as that thing
that turns to a star each night and climbs—

leaving you (it is impossible to untangle the threads)
your own life, time and standing high and growing,
so that, sometimes blocked in, sometimes reaching out,
one moment your life is a stone to you, and the next, a star.

[translated by Robert Bly]

from The Wishing Bone Cycle of the Swampy Cree

All the warm nights	do this
sleep in moonlight	you will shine outward
	in old age
keep letting it	
go into you	the moon will think
	you are
do this	the moon
all your life	

[translated by Howard Norman]

Untitled by Antonio Machado

Last night, as I was sleeping,
I dreamt — marvelous error! —
that a spring was breaking
out in my heart.
I said: Along which secret aqueduct,
Oh water, are you coming to me,
water of a new life
that I have never drunk?

Last night, as I was sleeping,
I dreamt — marvelous error! —
that I had a beehive
here inside my heart.
And the golden bees
were making white combs
and sweet honey
from my old failures.

Last night, as I was sleeping,
I dreamt — marvelous error! —
that a fiery sun was giving
light inside my heart.
It was fiery because I felt
warmth as from a hearth,
and sun because it gave light
and brought tears to my eyes.

Last night, as I slept,
I dreamt — marvelous error! —
that it was God I had
here inside my heart.

[translated by Robert Bly]



Shri Ramana Maharshi's What Is Sleep?

- Question: What is sleep?
- Maharshi: How can you know sleep when you are awake?
The answer is to go to sleep and find out what it is.
- Question: But I cannot know it this way.
- Maharshi: This question must be raised in sleep.
- Question: But I cannot raise the question then.
- Maharshi: So that is sleep.

Poem by Mary Oliver

The spirit
likes to dress up like this:
ten fingers,
ten toes,

shoulders, and all the rest
at night
in the black branches,

in the morning

in the blue branches
of the world.
It could float, of course,
but would rather

plumb rough matter.
Airy and shapeless thing,
it needs
the metaphor of the body,

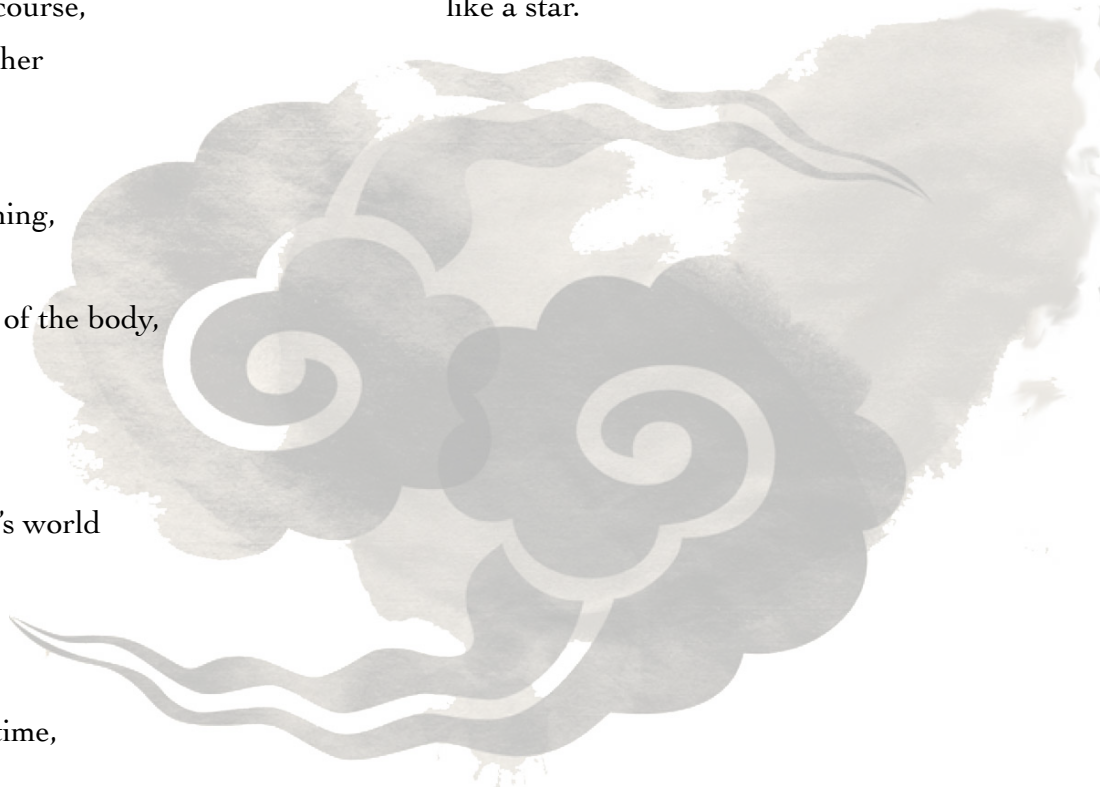
lime and appetite,
the oceanic fluids;
it needs the body's world
instinct

and imagination
and the dark hug of time,
sweetness
and tangibility,

to be understood,
to be more than pure light
that burns
where no one is —

so it enters us —
in the morning
shines from brute comfort
like a stitch of lightning;

and at night
lights up the deep and wondrous
drownings of the body
like a star.



A Quiet Joy by Yehuda Amichai

I'm standing in a place where I once loved.
The rain is falling. The rain is my home.

I think words of longing: a landscape
out to the very edge of what's possible.

I remember you waving your hand
as if wiping mist from the windowpane,

and your face, as if enlarged
from an old blurred photo.

Once I committed a terrible wrong
to myself and others.

But the world is beautifully made for doing good
and for resting, like a park bench.

And late in life I discovered
a quiet joy
like a serious disease that's discovered too late:

just a little time left now for quiet joy.



Late Fragment by Raymond Carver

And did you get what
you wanted from this life, even so?
I did.
And what did you want?
To call myself beloved, to feel myself
beloved on the earth.

Butterfly Dream by Zhuangzi

Once Zhuangzhou dreamt he was a butterfly, a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased. He didn't know he was Zhuangzhou. Suddenly he woke up and there he was, solid and unmistakable Zhuangzhou. But he didn't know if he was Zhuangzhou who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Zhuangzhou. Between Zhuangzhou and a butterfly there must be *some* distinction! This is called the Transformation of Things.



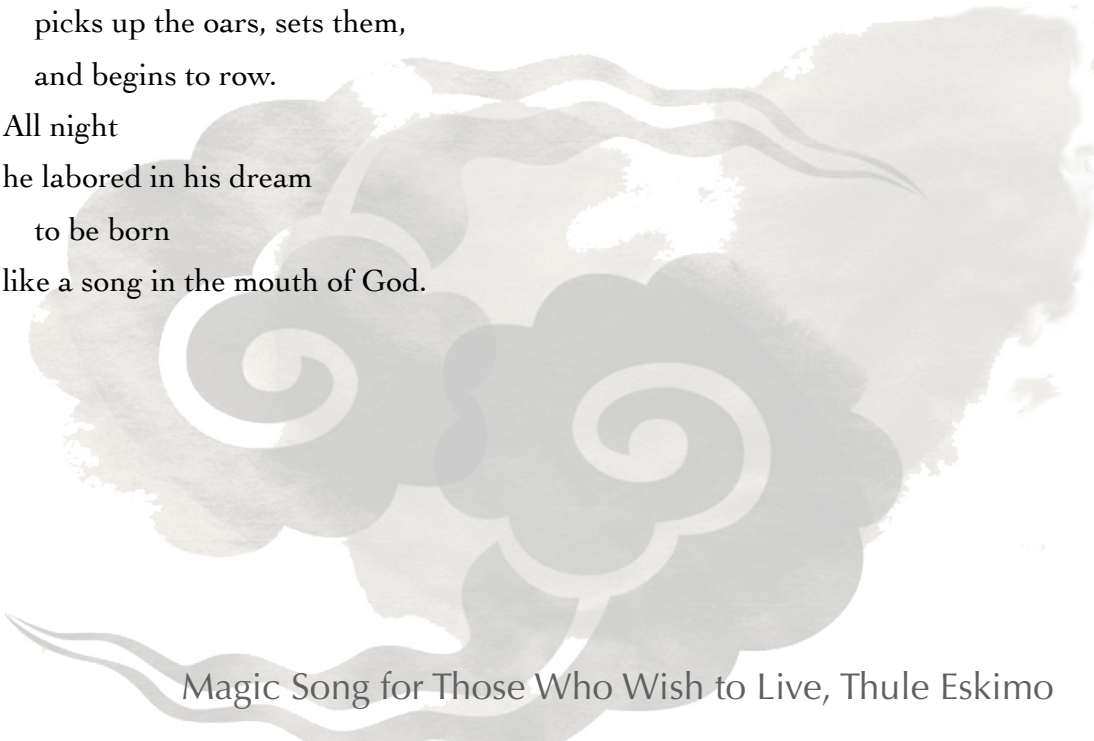
from Zen Words for the Heart by Hakuin

The ogre outside shoves the door,
The ogre inside holds it fast.
Dripping sweat from head to tail
Battling for their very lives,
They keep it up throughout the night
Until at last when the dawn appears
Their laughter fills the early light—
They were friends from the first.

[translated by Norman Waddell]

Like a Boat Drifting by Robert Sund

Like a boat drifting,
sleep flows forward
 on the deep water of dreams.
Drifts and drifts...
until, finally
the bottom falls out of knowledge.
In the fragrant mist of dawn
the rower wakes,
 picks up the oars, sets them,
 and begins to row.
All night
he labored in his dream
 to be born
like a song in the mouth of God.



Magic Song for Those Who Wish to Live, Thule Eskimo

Day arises
from its sleep,
day wakes up
with the dawning light.
Also you must arise,
Also you must awake
together with the day which comes.

Night and Sleep by Rumi

At the time of night-prayer, as the sun slides down,
the route the senses walk on closes, the route to the invisible opens.

The angel of sleep then gathers and drives along the spirits;
just as the mountain keeper gathers his sheep on a slope.

And what amazing sights she offers to the descending sheep!
Cities with sparkling streets, hyacinth gardens, emerald pastures!

The spirit sees astounding beings, turtles turned to humans,
humans turned to angels, when sleep erases the banal.

I think one could say the spirit goes back to its old home;
it no longer remembers where it lives, and loses its fatigue.

It carries around in life so many griefs and loads
and trembles under their weight; they are gone; it is well.



We are the Night Ocean by Rumi

We are the night ocean filled
with glints of light. We are the space
between the fish and the moon,
while we sit here together.

A Song at the End of the World by Czeslaw Milosz

On the day the world ends
A bee circles a clover,
A fisherman mends a glimmering net.
Happy porpoises jump in the sea,
By the rainspout young sparrows are playing
And the snake is gold-skinned as it should always be.

On the day the world ends
Women walk through the fields under their umbrellas,
A drunkard grows sleepy at the edge of a lawn,
Vegetable vendors shout in the street
And a yellow-sailed boat comes nearer the island
The voice of a violin lasts in the air
And leads into a starry night.

And those who expect lightning and thunder
Are disappointed.
And those who expect signs and angels' trumps
Do not believe it is happening now
As long as the sun and the moon are above,
As long as the bumblebee visits a rose,
As long as rosy infants are born
No one believes it is happening now.

Only a white-haired old man, who would be a prophet
Yet is not a prophet, for he's much too busy,
Repeats while he binds his tomatoes:
There will be no other end of the world,
There will be no other end of the world.

To See by Fernando Pessoa

To see the fields and the river
It isn't enough to open the window.
To see the trees and the flowers
It isn't enough not to be blind.
It is also necessary to have no philosophy.
With philosophy there are no trees, just ideas.
There is only each one of us, like a cave.
There is only a shut window and the whole world outside,
And a dream of what could be seen if the window were opened,
Which is never what is seen when the window is opened.

[translated by Richard Zenith]

from Oda al Pasado by Pablo Neruda

Now.
This is that moment,
the drop of an instant
that washes away the past.
It is the present.
It is in your hands.
Racing, slipping,
tumbling like a waterfall.
But it is yours.
Help it grow.



End of Day Ceremony for Wartime

from Seven Laments for the War-Dead by Yehuda Amichai

1

Mr Beringer, whose son
fell at the Canal that strangers dug
so ships could cross the desert,
crosses my path at Jaffa Gate.

He has grown very thin, has lost
the weight of his son.

That's why he floats so lightly in the alleys
and gets caught in my heart like little twigs
that drift away

4

I came upon an old zoology textbook,
Brehm, Volume II, *Birds*:

in sweet phrases, an account of the life of the starling,
swallow, and thrush. Full of mistakes in an antiquated
Gothic typeface, but full of love, too. "Our feathered
friends." "Migrate from us to the warmer climes."
Nest, speckled egg, soft plumage, nightingale,
stork." "The harbingers of spring." The robin,
red-breasted.

Year of publication: 1913, Germany,
on the eve of the war that was to be
the eve of all my wars.

My good friend who died in my arms, in
his blood,
on the sands of Ashdod. 1948, June.

Oh my friend,
red-breasted.

I, May I Rest In Peace by Yehuda Amichai

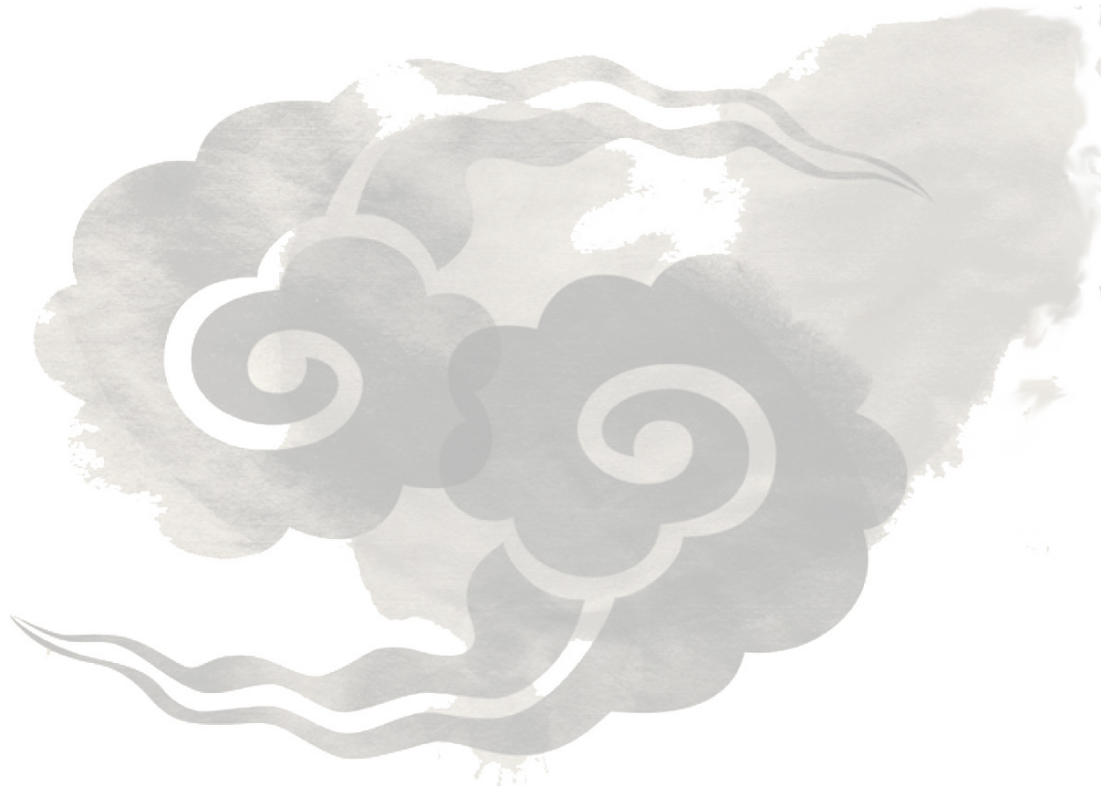
I, may I rest in peace — I, who am still living, say,
may I have peace in the rest of my life.
I want peace right now while I'm still alive.
I don't want to wait like that pious man who wished for one leg
of the golden chair of Paradise, I want a four-legged chair
right here, a plain wooden chair. I want the rest of my peace now.
I have lived out my life in wars of every kind: battles without
and within, close combat, face-to-face, the faces always
my own, my lover-face, my enemy face.
Wars with the old weapons — sticks and stones, blunt axe, words,
dull ripping knife, love and hate,
and wars with newfangled weapons — machine gun, missile,
words, land mines exploding, love and hate.
I don't want to fulfill my parents' prophecy that life is war.
I want peace with all my body and all my soul.
Rest me in peace.



Prayer

Let music swell the breeze,
and ring from all the trees
sweet freedom's song;
let mortal tongues awake;
let all that breathe partake;
let rocks their silence break,
the sound prolong.

3rd verse of "America" by Samuel F. Smith



Celtic Blessing

Deep peace of the running wave to you

Deep peace of the silent stars

Deep peace of the flowing air to you

Deep peace of the quiet earth

May peace may peace may peace

fill your soul

Let peace let peace let peace

make you whole

Dona Nobis Pacem Give Us Peace

1
Do-na no - bis pa - cem, pacem. Dona ----- no - bis pa - cem.

2
Do - na no - bis pa - cem. Do-na no-bis pa - cem.

3
Do - na no - bis pa-cem. Do-na no-bis pa - cem.

