

OUT!

Overwhelmed by domestic chaos and the demands of relationships
I flee the confines of the house to the woods or the shoreline
where everything falls into place and life makes sense again.



Surrendering to the earth,
as every cell of my body slowly settles,
listening inside – listening outside,
absorbed by the movement of light and leaves
and the interweaving branches in the canopy above.

Sprawled on the earth
how do I explain to concerned passers-by
that this is the healthiest and sanest thing I know how to do
in a world where sitting on the earth under a tree
is considered strange.

There's a need for this type of anti-social behaviour.



I understand you feel you don't have time for this
but we don't have time not to.

Please don't hurry on through the woods of your life,
like the white rabbit
never stopping to take a breath
always getting ahead for tomorrow
trying to keep on top of things.



Throw your phone away!
Escape from the illusion that the world exists in its tiny screen -
it's right here under your feet,
in the air that you breathe,
in your muscles and your bones,
your heart and your belly.
Our limbs and our lungs are not designed to spend hours
slumped in front of a screen
or cooped up in cars or planes trying to get
somewhere else.

Buffeted by internal storms I tramp
over the cliffs and through the woods,
stretching my limbs and filling my lungs until,
lying on the pebbles soothed by the sound of the waves,
touched by the beauty of the winter light in the late afternoon

I breathe freely again
re-membering who I am
and where I belong.



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Reading

Oliver, M. (2018) *A Thousand Mornings*, London, UK: Corsair.
Shepherd, N. (2011) *The Living Mountain*, Edinburgh & London: Canongate.
Wall Kimmerer, R. (2020) *Braiding Sweetgrass*, UK: Penguin Random House.

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