

Sunday December 6, 2020

The Stone Woman

Koan:

The stone woman gives birth in the middle of the night.

Questions:

1. If the koan were your dream, what would you make of it?
2. Have you ever known anyone who seemed to be “made of stone”? Have you ever felt stony? What does it feel like?
3. Do you have any particular memories of the middle of the night?

Poem

The Turtle

breaks from the blue-black
skin of the water, dragging her shell
with its mossy scutes
across the shallows and through the rushes
and over the mudflats, to the uprise,
to the yellow sand,
to dig with her ungainly feet
a nest, and hunker there spewing
her white eggs down
into the darkness, and you think

of her patience, her fortitude,
her determination to complete
what she was born to do----
and then you realize a greater thing----
she doesn't consider
what she was born to do.
She's only filled
with an old blind wish.
It isn't even hers but came to her
in the rain or the soft wind

which is a gate through which her life keeps
walking.

She can't see
herself apart from the rest of the world
or the world from what she must do
every spring.
Crawling up the high hill,
luminous under the sand that has packed against
her skin,
she doesn't dream
she knows
she is a part of the pond she lives in,
the tall trees are her children,
the birds that swim above her
are tied to her by an unbreakable string.

by *Mary Oliver*