

2.

## Another Dream Prompt (first one was in prompts 2013)

Dreams, it has been said, were the first poems and stories told around the fire in ancient tribal cultures. Write a poem about a dream, or dreams, or dreaming. If you make up a dream, include some dream elements such as confusions of time, inconsistencies and incongruities. The dead are alive again.

### Dreams to Have

1.

They film a woman falling from a bridge  
but the camera stops, and she stays  
in the air. I remember that place  
the rest of my life: it is going on  
while events wait for their cues.

2. Time jerks its way forward and you are  
a long-waiting part, ready, ready,  
walking our town. I round your corner  
and my eyes come true.

3.

At a gallery every picture has us  
in it: a frame back of the frame  
pulls us, and I turn with an awkward  
lope, heading outward. But that urge  
takes me ever toward the center,  
which moves.

4.

A person mixing colors bends low  
when we walk there. "Why are you  
so intent on that bottle you are stirring?"  
And then I know: in that little bottle  
he has the sky.

William Stafford

Dreams to Have  
(after William Stafford)

1.

Once you learn the outcome  
of falling dreams — the bouncing  
or the waking up in time —  
falling is more like flying.

2.

Just as things turn nightmare-  
comes a-knocking.  
When you open the door,  
you're handed a ladder and advised:  
"Go ahead, climb out of this dream."

3.

In your dream, your beloved dead,  
laughing, take their places  
around the massive oak table.  
While pushing food around on their plates,  
they wear their bodies  
like baggy costumes that don't quite fit.

4.

Let the last dream hand you  
a riddle wrapped in layers.  
You pull at endless ribbons.  
Inside is a small golden egg.  
You must wait for the riddle to hatch.

jch 2/10/2013

All night  
the dark buds of dreams  
open  
richly

In the center  
of every petal  
is a letter...

Mary Oliver  
the beginning of "Dreams" / in *Dreamwork*

## Now Even Dreaming Poetry Prompts

In my dream  
I was writing a poetry prompt,  
something like:

You are leaning  
against a car.  
Describe three or more  
particulars,  
then ask a question  
about the quality of your life.

This old back road's deserted.  
West beyond skeletal trees  
the sinking light smiles mockingly.

The few chrome twinklings  
on my rusty car turn dull  
as daylight fades.  
The woods close in,  
surround me  
with rustles and growls.

Why this?  
I wonder.  
Why anything?

jch 3/6/2016

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.

Antonio Machado  
Excerpt from *Times Alone* (Soldedades)  
Translated by Robert Bly  
In *Times Alone: Selected Poems of Antonio Machado*