

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*