

Moments in Paradise Prompt

I'm thinking about our "moments of paradise"...those times in our lives when time stood still, our minds were totally undistracted, and we were so present in the moment that it felt like paradise. I think each of us has many such amazing moments when life's busyness all falls away and the moment feels holy. (Polly Brown's poem below gave me the idea for this prompt)

Write today's poem about one such moment in your life or several or recurring such moments.

Any Morning

Just lying on the couch and being happy.
Only humming a little, the quiet sound in the head.
Trouble is busy elsewhere at the moment, it has
so much to do in the world.

People who might judge are mostly asleep; they can't
monitor you all the time, and sometimes they forget.
When dawn flows over the hedge you can
get up and act busy.

Little corners like this, pieces of Heaven
left lying around, can be picked up and saved.
People won't even see that you have them,
they are so light and easy to hide.

Later in the day you can act like the others.
You can shake your head. You can frown.

William Stafford
in *The Way It Is*

Near the Connecticut

Four of us traveling in one canoe—
two small enough to fit between

the paddlers— down the Connecticut,
New England's watery spine.

We sat on a ledge in sunshine;
then, needing to pee, I climbed

to a small wood. Sun-dappled shade,
blue chinks of sky, nameless

sparrows dipping in, weaving through:
no remembered detail explains

why in that moment I woke
to our life in paradise. Which means

it could happen
almost anywhere again.

Polly Brown
in *Pebble Leaf Feather Knife*

A Portable Paradise

And if I speak of Paradise,
then I'm speaking of my grandmother
who told me to carry it always
on my person, concealed, so
no one else would know but me.
That way they can't steal it, she'd say.

And if life puts you under pressure,
trace its ridges in your pocket,
smell its piney scent on your handkerchief,
hum its anthem under your breath.
And if your stresses are sustained and daily,
get yourself to an empty room— be it hotel,
or hostel or hovel — find a lamp
and empty your paradise onto a desk:
your white sands, green hills and fresh fish.
Shine the lamp on it like the fresh hope
of morning, and keep staring at it until you sleep.

Roger Robinson
in *Ten Poems of Hope*
Candlestick Press

There is no day without its moments in paradise.

Jorge Luis Borges

The Reinvention of Happiness

I remember how I'd lie on my roof
listening to the fat violinist
below in the sleeping village
play Schubert so badly, so well.

Jack Gilbert
in *Refusing Heaven*