

RAINER MARIA RILKE

1875-1926



God talks to each of us as he creates us
(Gott spricht zu jedem nur, eh er ihn macht)

God talks to each of us as he creates us,
then walks with us silently out of night.
But the words, spoken to us before we start,
these cloudy words, are these:

5 Sent forth by your senses,
go to the very edge of your desire;
invest me.

Back behind the things grow as fire,
so that their shadows, lengthened,
10 will always and completely cover me.

Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror.
Only press on: no feeling is final.
Don't let yourself be cut off from me.
Nearby is that country
15 known as Life.

You will recognize it
by its seriousness.

Give me your hand.

—Translated from the German by Edward Snow

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