

The Invitation

“It doesn’t interest me what you do for a living.
I want to know what you ache for,
and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart’s longing.

It doesn’t interest me how old you are.
I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love,
For your dream, for the adventure of being alive

It doesn’t matter what planets are squaring your moon.
I want to know if you have touched the center of your own sorrow,
if you have been opened by life’s betrayals,
or have become shriveled and closed from fear of further pain.

I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine of your own.
If you can dance with wildness and let ecstasy fill you to
the tips of your fingers and toes,
without cautioning us to be careful, be realistic,
or to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn’t interest me if the story you are telling me is true.
I want to know if you can disappoint others to be true to yourself.
If you can bear the accusation of betrayal, and not betray your own soul.
I want to know if you can be faithful, and therefore trustworthy.

I want to know if you can see beauty
even when it is not pretty everyday,
and if you can source your life on the edge of the lake,
and shout to the silver of the moon.

It doesn’t interest me where you live,
or how much money you have.
I want to know if you can get up after a night of grief and despair,
Weary and bruised to the bone,
and do what needs to be done for the children.

It doesn’t interest me who you know or how you came to be here.
I want to know if you will stand in the center of fire with me,
And not shrink back

It doesn’t interest me where or what,
Or with whom you have studied.
I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away.
I want to know if you can be alone with yourself,
and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments.”

-Oriah- Indian Elder