

Poems from Rilke's Book of Hours; Love Poems To God

If only for once it were still.
If the *not quite right* and the *why this*
Could be muted, and the neighbors' laughter,
And the static my senses make –
If all of it didn't keep me from coming awake –

Then in one vast thousandfold thought
I could think you up to where thinking ends.

I could possess you,
even for the brevity of a smile,
to offer you
to all that lives, in gladness.

I, 7

I live my life in widening circles
That reach out across the world.
I may not complete this last one
But I give myself to it.

I circle around God, around the primordial tower.
I've been circling for thousands of years
And I still don't know: am I a falcon,
a storm, or a great song?

I, 2

We must not portray you in king's robes,
You drifting mist that brought forth the morning.

Once again from the old paintboxes
We take the same gold for scepter and crown
That has disguised you through the ages.

Piously we produce our images of you
Till they stand around you like a thousand walls.
And when our hearts would simply open,
Our fervent hands hide you.

I, 4