

The Guest-House

This being human is a guest-house
Every morning a new arrival

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
Who violently sweep your house
Empty of its furniture,

Still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you
Out for some new delight

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
Meet them at the door laughing,
And invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
Because each has been sent
As a guide from beyond

Say I Am You: Poetry Interspersed with Stories of Rumi and Shams, Translated by John Moyné and Coleman Barks, Maypop, 1994.