

Letters to a Young Poet (excerpt)

by Rainer Marie Rilke

How should we be able to forget those ancient myths that are the beginning of all peoples?
The myths about dragons that, at the last moment, turn into princesses.

Perhaps all the dragons of our lives are princesses, who are only waiting to see us, once
beautiful and brave.

Perhaps everything terrible is, in its deepest being, something helpless that wants help from
us.

So, you must not be frightened if a sadness rises up before you, larger than any you have
ever seen.

If a restiveness like light and cloud-shadows, passes over your hands and over all you do.
You must think that something is happening to you.

That life has not forgotten you.

That it holds you in its hand. It will not let you fall.