

The Journey by Mary Oliver

One day you finally knew what you had to do,
and began, though the voices around you kept shouting
their bad advice-- though the whole house began to tremble
and you felt the old tug at your ankles.

"Mend my life!" each voice cried.

But you didn't stop.

You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy was terrible.

It was already late enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen branches and stones.

But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do—
determined to save
the only life you could save.

~*~

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