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An Oyster Shell Robert Bly

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Robert Bly

AN OYSTER SHELL

The shell is scarred, as if it were a rushing river bottom, scratched by the great trees being carried down. Sometimes its whitish calcium has been folded over itself, as when the molten rock flows out; so something is still angry.

When we turn it over, we feel that the shell on the inside is more secretive, more finished, more human. Our fingers feel the smooth inside and know of blueberries, earned pleasure, the sweet loneliness of the old man late at night, when angels keep looking for him in the early dawn, calling across the snow-covered fields.