

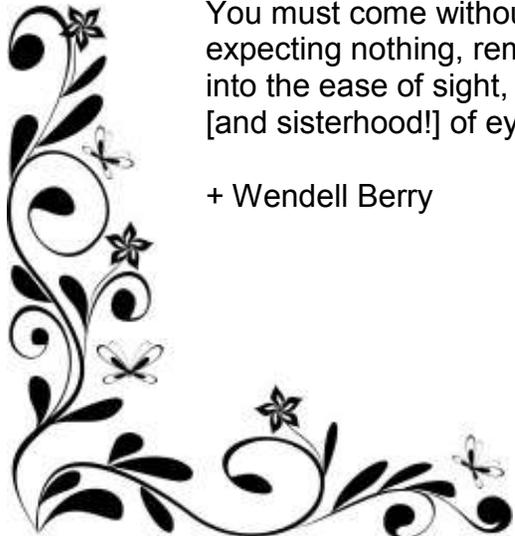
## SABBATH, V

How long does it take to make the woods?  
As long as it takes to make the world.  
The woods is present as the world is, the presence  
of all its past, and of all its time to come.  
It is always finished, it is always being made, the act  
of its making forever greater than the act of its destruction.  
It is a part of eternity, for its end and beginning  
belong to the end and beginning of all things,  
the beginning lost in the end, the end in the beginning.

What is the way to the woods, how do you go there?  
By climbing up through the six days' field,  
kept in all the body's years, the body's  
sorrow, weariness, and joy. By passing through  
the narrow gate on the far side of that field  
where the pasture grass of the body's life gives way  
to the high, original standing of the trees.  
By coming into the shadow, the shadow  
of the grace of the strait way's ending,  
the shadow of the mercy of light.

Why must the gate be narrow?  
Because you cannot pass beyond it burdened.  
To come in among these trees you must leave behind  
the six days' world, all of it, all of its plans and hopes.  
You must come without weapon or tool, alone,  
expecting nothing, remembering nothing,  
into the ease of sight, the brotherhood  
[and sisterhood!] of eye and leaf.

+ Wendell Berry



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