**Death is Before Me Today**

Death is before me today

like health to the sick

like leaving the bedroom after sickness.

Death is before me today

like the odor of myrrh

like sitting under a cloth on a day of wind.

Death is before me today

like the odor of lotus

like sitting down on the shore of drunkenness.

Death is before me today

like the end of the rain

like a man’s home-coming after the wars abroad.

Death is before me today

like the sky when it clears

like a man’s wish to see home after numberless years of captivity.

*Anonymous, c. 1900 B.C.*

*Trans. from Egyptian by W.S. Merwin*