

The Way To Start A Day

The way to start a day is this –

Go outside and face the east and greet the sun
with some kind of blessing or chant or song
that you made yourself and keep for early morning.

The way to make the song is this –

Don't try to think what words to use until you're standing there alone.

When you feel the sun you'll feel the song too. Just sing it.

But don't think you're the only one who ever worked that magic.

Your caveman brothers knew what to do. Your cavewoman sisters knew, too.

They sang to help the sun come up and lifted their hands to its power.

A morning needs to be sung to. A new day needs to be honored.

People have always known that.

Didn't they chant at dawn in the sun temples of Peru?

And leap and sway to Aztec flutes in Mexico?

And drum sunrise songs in the Congo?

And ring a thousand small gold bells in China?

Didn't the pharaohs of Egypt say the only sound at dawn

should be the sound of songs that please the morning sun?

They knew what songs to sing. People always seemed to know.

And everywhere they knew what gifts the sun wanted.

In some places they gave gold. In some places they gave flowers.

In some places, sacred smoke blown to the four directions.

Some places, feathers and good thoughts. Some places, fire.

But everywhere they knew to give *something*.

And everywhere they knew to turn their faces eastward as the sun came up.

Some people still know.

When the first pale streak of light cuts through the darkness,

wherever they are, those people make offerings

and send mysterious strong songs to the sun.

They know exactly how to start a day.

Their blessings float on the wind over Pueblo cornfields in New Mexico,

and you hear their morning songs in villages in Africa,

and they salute the sunrise ceremonially in the high cold mountains of Peru.

Today long before dawn they were already waiting in Japan with prayers

and they were gathering at little shrines in India with marigolds in their hands.

They were bathing in the sacred Ganges River as the sun came up.

And high on a mesa in Arizona they were holding a baby toward the sun.

They were speaking the child's new name so the sun would hear and know that child.

It had to be sunrise. And it had to be that first sudden moment.

That's when all the power of life is in the sky.

Some people say there is a new sun every day,
that it begins its life at dawn and lives for one day only.
They say you have to welcome it. You have to make the sun happy.

You have to make a good day for it.
You have to make a good world for it to live its one-day life in.

And the way to start, they say, is just by looking east at dawn.

When they look east tomorrow, you can too.
Your song will be an offering – and you'll be one more person
in one more place at one more time in the world
saying hello to the sun, letting it know you are there.

If the sky turns a color sky never was before, just watch it.

That's part of the magic.

That's the way to start a day.