

Book of Hours II, 16

How surely gravity's law,
strong as an ocean current,
takes hold of even the strongest thing
and pulls it toward the heart of the world.

Each thing –
each stone, blossom, child –
is held in place.
Only we, in our arrogance,
push out beyond what we belong to
for some empty freedom.

If we surrendered
to earth's intelligence
we could rise up rooted, like trees.

Instead we entangle ourselves
in knots of our own making
and struggle, lonely and confused.

So, like children, we begin again
to learn from the things,
because they are in God's heart;
they have never left him.

This is what the things can teach us:
to fall,
patiently to trust our heaviness.
Even a bird has to do that
before he can fly.

– Rainer Maria Rilke