

## How Growing Happens

For your sake poets sequester themselves,  
gathering images to churn the mind,  
journeying forth to ripen their symbols,  
and all their lives they are so alone . . . .  
And painters paint only  
that the world, so transient as it is,  
can be given back to you,  
to last forever.

All becomes eternal.  
In the Mona Lisa  
some woman has long since ripened like wine,  
and the enduring feminine is held there  
through all the ages.

Those who create are a bit like the Divine.  
They long for the eternal.  
They say: be forever!  
Meaning: be in the oneness.

And lovers also gather your inheritance.  
They are the poets of one brief hour.  
They kiss an expressionless mouth into a smile  
as if creating it anew, more beautiful.

Awakening desire, *they make a place  
where pain can enter;  
that's how growing happens.*  
They bring suffering along with their laughter,  
and longings that had slept and now awaken  
to weep in each other's arms.

- Rilke in *Book of Hours*, translated by Anita Barrow & Joanna Macy, edits by Lyn