

To Happiness

by Carl Dennis

If you're not approaching, I hope at least
You're off to comfort someone who needs you more,
Not lost wandering aimlessly
Or drawn to the shelter of well-lit rooms
Where people assume you've arrived already.

If you're coming this way, send me the details—
The name of the ship, the port it leaves from—
So I can be down on the dock to help you
Unload your valises, your trunks and boxes
And stow them in the big van I'll have rented.

I'd like this to be no weekend stay
Where a single change of clothes is sufficient.
Bring clothes for all seasons, enough to fill a closet;
And instead of a single book for the bedside table
Bring boxes of all your favorites.

I'll be eager to clear half my shelves to make room,
Eager to read any titles you recommend.
If we've many in common, feel free to suggest
They prove my disposition isn't to blame
For your long absence, just some problems of attitude,

A few bad habits you'll help me set to one side.
We can start at dinner, which you're welcome
To cook for us while I sweep and straighten
And set the table. Then light the candles
You've brought from afar for the occasion.

Light them and fill the room I supposed I knew
With a glow that shows me I was mistaken.
Then help me decide if I'm still the person I was
Or someone else, someone who always believed in you
And imagined no good reasons for your delay.

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