

This Day: Collected & New Sabbath Poems *by Wendell Berry*

1987-1

*Come to the woods' edge
on my Sunday morning walk,
I stand resting a moment beside
a ragged half-dead wild plum
in bloom, its perfume
a moment enclosing me,
and standing side by side
with the old broken blooming tree,
I almost understand,
I almost recognize as a friend
the great impertinence of beauty
that comes even to the dying,
even to the fallen, without reason
sweetening the air.*

*I walk on,
distracted by the letter accusing me
of distraction, which distracts me
only from the hundred things
that would otherwise distract me
from this whiteness, lightness,
sweetness in the air. The mind*

*is broken by the thousand
calling voices it is always too late
to answer, and that is why it yearns
for some hard task, lifelong, longer
than life, to concentrate it
and to make it whole.*

*But where is the all-welcoming,
all-consecrating Sabbath
that would do the same? Where
that quietness of the heart
and the eye's clarity
that would be a friend's reply
to the white-blossoming plum tree?*