



## For the Traveler, by John O'Donohue

Every time you leave home,  
Another road takes you  
Into a world you were never in.

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New strangers on other paths await.  
New places that have never seen you  
Will startle a little at your entry.  
Old places that know you well  
Will pretend nothing  
Changed since your last visit.

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When you travel, you find yourself  
Alone in a different way,  
More attentive now  
To the self you bring along,  
Your more subtle eye watching  
You abroad; and how what meets you  
Touches that part of the heart  
That lies low at home:

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How you unexpectedly attune  
To the timbre in some voice,  
Opening in conversation  
You want to take in  
To where your longing  
Has pressed hard enough  
Inward, on some unsaid dark,  
To create a crystal of insight  
You could not have known  
You needed  
To illuminate  
Your way.

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When you travel,  
A new silence  
Goes with you,  
And if you listen,  
You will hear  
What your heart would  
Love to say.

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A journey can become a sacred thing:  
Make sure, before you go,  
To take the time  
To bless your going forth,

To free your heart of ballast  
So that the compass of your soul  
Might direct you toward  
The territories of spirit  
Where you will discover  
More of your hidden life,  
And the urgencies  
That deserve to claim you.

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May you travel in an awakened way,  
Gathered wisely into your inner ground;  
That you may not waste the invitations  
Which wait along the way to transform you.

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May you travel safely, arrive refreshed,  
And live your time away to its fullest;  
Return home more enriched, and free  
To balance the gift of days which call you.

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~ John O'Donohue ~