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The Buddha's Last Instruction

Alan Stringer
Mary Oliver

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The Buddha's Last Instruction

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Deliberately, half note = MM. 54

"Make of your-self a light, make of your-self a light."

Mezzo-Soprano

Piano

Mez.

Pno.

"Make of your-self a light, make of your-self a light," said the
Buddha, before he died.

I think of this every morning as the east begins to tear off its many clouds of darkness, to send up the
signal - a white fan streaked with pink and violet.

even green.

old man, he lay down between two sala
trees, and he might have said

anything, knowing it was his final hour.

The light burns upward, it thickens and settles over the
round him, the villagers gathered and stretched

forward to listen. Even before the sun itself
hangs, detached, in the blue

air, I am touched everywhere by its

ocean of yellow waves.
No doubt he thought of everything that had happened in his difficult life. And then I feel the sun itself as it blazes over the hills, like a million flowers on fire.
clearly I'm not needed, yet I feel myself turning into something of inexplicable value. Slow ly, beneath the branches, he raised
his head. He looked into the faces of that frightened crowd.