

Two Poems by Bonnie Thurston

Wake Early

Well yes, of course,
and not in fearful
response to Calvinistic
maxims of usefulness
("healthy, wealthy, wise"),
but for the stillness,
mysterious presence,
companionable, enfolding.

We must wake early.
How else can we see
the sky full of stars,
but low, as if bending
to kiss earth's darkness,
presage dawn's embrace,
provident daily reminder
we are not forgotten?

The Sound of Light

Hindus call it *shabd*,
and Sufis know it, too,
the Divine Light
(Hopkins' dazzling darkness?)
that falls from heaven
on our midnight world,
or glows from within,
suffusing all creation,
making celestial music
only the wise and holy hear.

Behind blue black mountains
dawn is unfurling
a bolt of rose velvet.
A line of birds blows
across the horizon
in a winter wind
that smells of snow.
Is it birds I hear
or the faintest *pianissimo*
of coming Light?

Further poems by Bonnie Thurston can be found on pages 44 and 60.

The Eye of Despair

Sometimes the best
you can do
is to howl.
When the wound
is so deep
you know the hurt
will never heal,
when the world
is so broken
a universe of prayer
won't repair it,
the best you
can do is howl.

Throw your head back
and (I dare you)
howl like a banshee,
like a she wolf,
like the wild thing
buried in your bones,
and feel rising
from deep, dark places
with the primal power
of your breath
a sliver of hope
to hurl with your howl
at the eye of despair.

Bonnie Thurston

Solitude

Solitude is not a place, but a way
that questions the cultural package,
pushes away its Pandora's box
of expansion and acquisition
for a certain psychic contraction,
a displacement of self from center,
the knowledge that giving is love.

It cultivates stillness of heart,
seldom speaks wantonly,
bears its own suffering silently.
It receives rather than imposes,
defers rather than asserts,
knows how little is required,
lives richly on next to nothing.

It does not encroach on creation
which responds with myriad delights.
Solitude is sentinel of authenticity,
of the bliss of living alone together.
The solitary sows secret seeds
of a public possibility
that scares the dead to death.

Bonnie Thurston

Thomas Morton Center
Baylor University
2001 North Campus Drive
Louisville, KY 40205

For biographical information on Bonnie Thurston, please see page 48.