

# Friends of Silence

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*"Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?"*

Dear Friends ~ Surrender. A simple and bewildering word. My childhood brain still carries the image of the wicked witch scrawling "Surrender Dorothy" across the sky while cackling triumphantly. My young heart soared when Dorothy refused to give in. In a world awash in forces that require resistance, entertaining the thought that a certain kind of surrender could open the gate of power and possibility seems outrageous, and worse, dangerous. Yet, confoundingly, this is the way grace and the Holy seem to work. Saints, sages, and poets know this and bear witness to the Mystery. Yet the spell song of it is hard to remember, unnerving to sing. It asks us to step back from the cherished self of efficacy, step down from the pedestal of control, and humbly open to other ways of receiving the healing and the future we long for. This is a magic beyond good and evil, beyond prediction, certainty, and knowing what's right. Astonishingly, such a surrender, such a bending and opening, brings us into the heart of things, where Love dwells and the fountain with its strange power springs up and out of the rock. So here are some words, friends, to encourage you in the soul skill of surrender. May you be refreshed and renewed. ~ Lindsay



Courage changes things and courage changes us. It's how we become. I have found that there is a "right-sized" fear inside any vision for change, and in taking courageous action we develop a part of ourselves that can talk back to and hold the fear without letting it lead... The courage we need is the courage to fail and stay... The courage to exit the safety of our dying delusions... The courage to surrender... The courage to love and be loved.

~ Prentis Hemphill in *WHAT IT TAKES TO HEAL*

*Abandon yourself to the Beloved,  
draw closer and closer to Love.  
For when you dwell in peace within  
Love's heart,  
and know the Divine Spirit in  
your own heart,  
You become as nothing, yet  
all things are yours.  
As you radiate the healing love of  
your inmost Being  
into a suffering, scarred, yet  
ever-sacred world,  
Offer grateful praise from the Chalice  
of your heart  
to the One who loves through you.*

~ Nan Merrill, from her interpretation of "Psalm 119"  
in *PSALMS FOR PRAYING*



It is our collective fate to live amidst the hard times we're experiencing today, with culture and nature in upheaval around the world. Yet, whatever shatters the outer patterns of our lives can also open us up to psychological and mythical levels of unusual depth and meaning. During times of crisis, certain archetypal energies and shapes... arise and assist us in navigating radical transformation. In this way, a crisis can also be a calling, a crucible of transformation, and a collective rite of passage.

~ Michael Meade from "Wisdom of the Threshold"  
on [michaelmeade.substack.com](http://michaelmeade.substack.com), March 2026



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Don't say, don't say there is no water  
to solace the dryness at our hearts.  
I have seen

the fountain springing out of the rock wall  
and you drinking there. And I too  
before your eyes

found footholds and climbed  
to drink the cool water.

The woman of that place, shading her eyes,  
frowned as she watched—but not because  
she grudged the water,

only because she was waiting  
to see we drank our fill and were  
refreshed.

Don't say, don't say there is no water.  
That fountain is there among its scalloped  
green and gray stones,

it is still there and always there  
with its quiet song and strange power  
to spring in us,  
up and out through the rock.

~ Denise Levertov, "The Fountain" in *THE JACOB'S LADDER*

I tried to explain how, through so many endings, this young forest is just beginning to deepen itself, just beginning to rediscover what it truly is: a natural community enriched by change and defined by scars... Over millennia, this forest has weathered storms, beyond counting, each time responding by becoming something new. This one will be no different...

I wonder how many times the world will change before we learn that the world IS change. I wonder how long we will struggle against change like a fish on a line, rail against it like children, build fortresses of sand around ourselves only to see the waves of change dissolve them again and again. I wonder how long it will take for us to learn that stability is vulnerability, that resilience is strength...

This is what it means to be resilient: to mourn a thousand endings and celebrate a thousand beginnings, to be as strong as steel and as soft as warm butter, to practice both resilience and acceptance, to cradle both life and death in our arms.

~ Ethan Tapper in *HOW TO LOVE A FOREST: THE BITTERSWEET WORK OF TENDING A CHANGING WORLD*

My friend James calls it the rough blessing, the blessing that rubs, that chafes, that scrapes. Perhaps I wanted blessings to only feel good, to be gentle. But the word itself comes from the practice of sprinkling blood on an altar. Why should I be surprised when the blood for the rite is my own? I am thinking of how today when I was hemorrhaging fear, my friend comforted me when I called her in tears. I felt so loved when she listened and soothed. Such luminous intimacy grew from my wound. Oh, ache of being human. Oh, the blessing.

~ Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer,  
“...with thanks to James Crews”  
on her blog *A HUNDRED FALLING VEILS*

...Today I learned that trees can't sleep with our lights on. That they knit a forest in their language, their feelings. This is not a metaphor. Like seeing a face across a crowd, we are learning all the old things, newly shined and numbered. I'm always looking for a place to lie down and cry. Green, mossed, shaded. Or rock-quiet, empty. Somewhere to hush and start over. I put on my antlers in the sun. I walk through the dark gates of the trees. Grief waters my footsteps, leaving a trail that glistens.

~ Anne Haven McDonnell from “She Told Me the Earth Loves Us”  
in *ALL WE CAN SAVE: TRUTH, COURAGE AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE CLIMATE CRISIS*

The question is no longer just how to succeed in the world. It is how to remain human in a time of unraveling, and how to become, in the deepest sense, both soulful and revolutionary: ruthless in understanding the material conditions of the age, yet still capable of love, grief, reverence, and fidelity to life. That task may require discipline and strength, yes, but also the harder, slower, less glamorous work of entering the landscape of the soul.

~ Brad Hornick from “Masculinity and the Landscape of the Soul” on *resilience.org*

...there are at least two ways to understand what it means to have our hearts broken. One is to imagine the heart broken into shards and scattered about—a feeling most of us know, and a fate we would like to avoid. The other is to imagine the heart broken open into new capacity—a process that is not without pain but one that many of us would welcome. As I stand in the tragic gap between reality and possibility, this small, tight fist of a thing called my heart can break open into greater capacity to hold more of my own and the world's suffering and joy, despair and hope.

~ Parker Palmer in *A HIDDEN WHOLENESS: THE JOURNEY TOWARD AN UNDIVIDED LIFE*

...The times are urgent, let us go slowly down into sanctuary. The times are urgent, let us be slowed down by the beings that exceed us. The times are urgent, let us be defeated by things that we cannot understand. The times are urgent, let us defract our ways of knowing. The times are urgent, let us be released from the traps of the things we already know.

~ Bayo Akomolafe; read more at [bayoakomolafe.net](http://bayoakomolafe.net)



*How surely gravity's law,  
strong as an ocean current,  
takes hold of the smallest thing  
and pulls it toward the heart of the world.*

*Each thing—  
each stone, blossom, child—  
is held in place.*

*Only we, in our arrogance,  
push out beyond what we each belong to  
for some empty freedom.*

*If we surrendered  
to earth's intelligence  
we could rise up rooted, like trees...*

~ Rainer Maria Rilke from “Gravity's Law”  
in *RILKE'S BOOK OF HOURS: LOVE POEMS TO GOD*