

Friends of Silence

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

Dear Friends ~ I have been living with Rainer Maria Rilke's poem "Gravity's Law," letting it percolate within me while the events of this past month weigh heavily upon me. How do we keep our inner hearts alive and well while this national heaviness and crisis grips and pushes each of us?

Merton speaks of "a point of nothingness at the center of our being," a point of absolute poverty, the small thing within us that Rilke says is being pulled by "gravity's law" toward the heart of the world. When we surrender to gravity's law and befriend our own poverty of being, "we rise up rooted, like trees." The knots of our own making are untangled. Our struggle, our loneliness and confusion, our entanglements are held in place within the heart of the One who holds all things together.

Like children, we begin again to learn from the small things, which live in God's heart. Gravity's law teaches us to fall and to trust our heaviness. We see the beauty in our brokenness, the power of our poverty, the fuel in our falling, the holiness in our heaviness. Like a baby bird who has yet to fly, we are at the edge of the nest, and the mother bird pushes us out. We trust our own heaviness. And we start to fly. What is your heaviness teaching you? ~ Bob



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if each day falls
inside each night
there exists a well
where clarity is imprisoned.

we need to sit on the rim
of the well of darkness
and fish for fallen light
with patience.

~ Pablo Neruda from
"Seeking Clarity"



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As swimmers dare
to lie face to the sky
and water bears them,
as hawks rest upon air
and air sustains them,
so would I learn to attain
free fall, and float
into Creator Spirit's deep embrace,
knowing no effort earns
that all-surrounding grace.

~ Denise Levertov from "The Avowal"

**How difficult seeing the truth is.
How lonely thinking the truth is.
How brave speaking the truth is.
And, how warm is the hand
Which is held out to people crying in the sad wind
Behind the lie.
How kind is the heart
Which accompanies people who cling to
The homeland in their hearts.**

~ from *Tsunangari (Connection)* in *The Kentaro Sato Choral Series*

There is a brokenness
out of which comes the unbroken,
a shatteredness
out of which blooms the unshatterable.
There is a sorrow
beyond all grief which leads to joy
and a fragility
out of whose depths emerges strength.

~ Rashani from "The Unbroken"

So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Wait. Behold. Wonder.
There will be time enough for running. For rushing. For worrying.
For pushing.
For now, stay. Wait
~ Jan Richardson

The art of being lost is not a matter of merely getting lost, but rather being lost and enthusiastically surrendering to the unlimited potential of it and using it to your advantage. The shift from being lost to being found is a gradual one.

The way to encourage that shift is to first accept that you don't know how to get to the place you want to be and then opening fully to the place you are until the old goals fall away and you discover more soulful goals emerging. Then you are no longer lost, but you have benefited immensely from having been so.

~ Bill Plotkin from "The Art of Being Lost" in *Soulcraft Musings* #30 August 11, 2017

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.

Instead we entangle ourselves
in knots of our own making
and struggle, lonely and confused.

So like children, we begin again
to learn from the things,
because they are in God's heart;
they have never left him.

This is what the things can teach us:
to fall,
patiently to trust our heaviness.

Even a bird has to do that
before he can fly.

~ Rainer Maria Rilke from "Gravity's Law"
in *BOOK OF HOURS*,

translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy



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**What we choose to fight is so tiny!
What fights with us is so great.
If only we would let ourselves be dominated
as things do by some immense storm,
we would become strong too, and not need names.**

**When we win it's with small things ,
and the triumph itself makes us small.
What is extraordinary and eternal
does not want to be bent by us....**

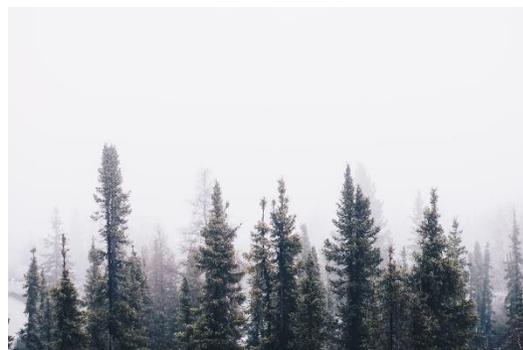
**This is how one grows: by being defeated,
decisively,
by constantly greater beings.**

~ Rainer Maria Rilke from "The Man Watching",
translated by Robert Bly

**It's 3:23 in the morning
and I can't sleep
because my great great grandchildren
ask me in my dreams
what did you do while the Planet was plundered?
what did you do when the Earth was unravelling?**

**What did you do
once
you
knew?**

**... I want just this consciousness reached
by people in range of secret frequencies.**
~ Drew Dellinger from "Hieroglyphic Stairway"
in *LOVE LETTER TO THE MILKY WAY*



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Battered; ill; aghast –
Lost in my own ruin –
Sometimes I am weak enough
To enter You.

~ Rumi

|t is | who must begin.
Once | begin, once | try –
here and now,
right where | am,
not excusing myself
by saying things
would be easier elsewhere ...
– to live in harmony
with the "voice of Being," as |
understand it within myself
– as soon as | begin that,
| suddenly discover,
to my surprise, that
| am neither the only one,
nor the first,
nor the most important one
to have set out
upon that road.
Whether all is really lost
or not depends entirely on
whether or not | am lost.

~ Václav Havel