



Spiritual Poetry Meetup

Poems to take home with you

December 17, 2023

Utterance – W.S. Merwin

The Second Music – Annie Lighthart

First Light – Albert Huffstickler

Winter Grief – David Whyte

The Tree in Winter – Lam Kam Chuen

Celtic Time Begins in Darkness – Amy Elizabeth Robinson



To join the Spiritual Poetry Meetup Group, go to

<https://www.meetup.com/Spiritual-Poetry-Meetup-International/>

For more Take-Home Poetry Packs, assorted poems, and the Intrinsic Heart blog, go to

<https://intrinsicheart.com>



Utterance

Sitting over words

very late I have heard a kind of whispered sighing

not far

like a night wind in pines or like the sea in the dark

the echo of everything that has ever

been spoken

still spinning its one syllable

between the earth and silence

—W.S. Merwin

from:

The Rain in the Trees



The Second Music

by Annie Lighthart

Now I understand that there are two melodies playing,
one below the other, one easier to hear, the other

lower, steady, perhaps more faithful for being less heard
yet always present.

When all other things seem lively and real,
this one fades. Yet the notes of it

touch as gently as fingertips, as the sound
of the names laid over each child at birth.

I want to stay in that music without striving or cover.
If the truth of our lives is what it is playing,

the telling is so soft
that this mortal time, this irrevocable change,

becomes beautiful. I stop and stop again
to hear the second music.

I hear the children in the yard, a train, then birds.
All this is in it and will be gone. I set my ear to it as I would to a heart.

“The Second Music” by Annie Lighthart from *Iron String* © Airlie Press, 2015.
<https://www.writersalmanac.org/index.html%3Fp=6173.html>



FIRST LIGHT

This morning up at four
couldn't get back to sleep
made coffee, dawdled, walked
out in still-dark morning, Diane
at Pronto Convenience, then
coffee on the bench in front of
the bakery, greeting the early
morning people, something in
me saying, "Don't miss this," -
how our life and our death
intertwine, "Don't miss this," -
that beautiful edge that comes
knowing there's only so much
time left, trying to come up
with a way to say I love you
to everything at once and
falling back on words again,
words scrawled in the first
morning light on my bench in
front of the bakery, right
here at the center of the world.

- Albert Huffstickler
[Photo by Leo Lei on Unsplash](#)
(b&w; original, color)

WINTER GRIEF

Let the rest
in this rested place
rest for you.

Let the birds sing quietly
and the geese call
from far off
and let the sky race
from west to east
when you cannot
lift a wing to fly.

Let evening trace
your loss in the branches
against a fading sky.

So that you can give up
and give in
and be given back to,

so that you can let
winter come and live
fully inside you,
so that you can
retrace the loving path
of heartbreak
that brought you here.

So you can cry alone
and be alone
so you can let yourself alone
to be lost,

so you can let the one
you have lost alone,
so that you can let
the one you have lost
have their own life
and even
their own death
without you.

So you can cry alone
and be alone
so you can let yourself alone
to be lost,

so you can let the one
you have lost alone,
so that you can let
the one you have lost
have their own life
and even
their own death
without you.

So that the world
and everyone who has ever lived
and ever died can come and go
as they please.

So you can let yourself not know,
what not knowing means.

So that you can be
even more generous
in your letting go
than they were in their leaving.

So that you can let winter
be winter.
So that you can let the world alone
to think of spring.

WINTER GRIEF

From THE BELL AND THE BLACKBIRD

Poetry by [David Whyte](#)

APRIL 2018 © David Whyte and Many Rivers Press

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The grief of losing a loved one, the need to walk, to remember, to heal when you cannot heal, to remember what you do not wish to remember. The unconscious call for invisible help, and the not knowing consciously, how, in any way, to ask for it, the way everything refuses to console until we are ready for that consolation. The way winter turns to spring. DW

The Tree in Winter



This is the time of hidden regeneration.
Mist hangs above the ground.
Frost forms on open fields.

The tree is still.
It stands alone and quiet.
In the darkness of the early morning, nature is asleep.
There is no movement in the air,
no hint of trembling in the branches.
The tree is silent in the darkness like a stone -
a pillar in the courtyard of an empty temple.

A distant sound breaks through the stillness.
The day's first light advances on the earth.
The shadow of the tree moves with the dawn,
but the tree is motionless.

The ground beneath the tree is frozen hard.
Above the ground, the bark is cold, the limbs are stiff.
A passer-by might wonder if the tree will live in spring.

But underneath the ground the earth is warm.
The weight of all the tree sinks to its roots.
They are indifferent to the frozen soil,
they grow toward the centre of the earth.

The tree is not afraid.
It was a seed: it knows the earth is holding it.
Within its core, a vital ring is being formed.
Around its spine, a new life is rising from the earth,
while flakes of snow are settling on the silent and unmoving tree.

Celtic Time Begins in Darkness -Amy Elizabeth Robinson



Listen.
What happens in darkness matters.
It's rest
then motion,
and not the other way around.
First rest,
then nourish,
then move. The darkness
informs the light. The light
is not bright preface to exhaustion. The night
is not mere sequel to the day.
So let me rest now
through the bruised velvet hours.
Let me rest
as the night figures prowl.
I will listen
with my sleeping body.
I will say welcome.
I will enter into
this startling fullness
called my life.