

The Eye of the Heart

 wccm.org/weekly-readings/the-eye-of-the-heart

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A selection from “Touching Reality” by Laurence Freeman OSB (a tape series available from www.mediomedia.com).

Meditation is a way of following the human trail to the center of reality, where we are able to experience a oneness that is peace and joy and love. The differences have been transcended; the dualities resolved. And we discover that we don’t meditate only for our own private peace of mind. We meditate with a growing sense that our journey is of vital importance to others. We are able to look at the other, to look at the world and see oneness rather than division. [. . .]

Saint Augustine said that the whole purpose of this life is to restore to health the eye of the heart, by which we see God in all things. Meditation is the means by which we restore health to the eye of the heart so that we can see . . . wherever we are, whoever we are with—even in the heart of conflict and discord, especially in the heart of conflict and discord. As we follow our journey, we begin to transcend the dualities that keep us locked into conflict, suspicion, anger and violence—verbal, psychological, or physical. All of which we know are the negative forces in ourselves, in our relationships, and in the world. As we move forward on the journey, meditation by meditation, day by day, we cut ourselves free from the root that holds us back from love.

After meditation: “Curse of the Charmed Life” by Kim Stafford in SINGER COME FROM AFAR (Pasadena: Red Hen Press, 2021), p. 117.

Curse of the Charmed Life

Things pretty much worked out for you—
you have what you need, and if you need more,
you have people ready and able to provide.

Sure, someday your luck will run out,
you’ll be helpless, then gone, and your people
will gather in your honor.

There will be music, and tears. People will
embrace—for you. There will be an odd
buoyancy, a chatter of kind words. blessing.

But the curse of this charm is exile
from the unlucky, how gifts make you
deaf to the sudden shout
of a man camped in the ravine,
make you blind to the dirty face
of a woman with a cardboard sign.

Without hunger, it’s easy to be heartless.
Without hurt, you are disabled. Without
the battering of bad luck, the pummeling
of lost hopes, the wounds of life without love,
of dark dreams that last past dawn, how can you
know what one life might do for another?

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