

# Feed on beauty, feed on sorrow

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[T]he call to deeper spiritual experience being heard by so many today is not an escape from the dilemmas and responsibilities of these troubled times—even if they are the “beginning of a new dark ages,” as some fear. As short-term social and economic solutions seem to fail us with greater frequency, and the brittle façade of our political system lies exposed, what else can we do except “go deeper?” Depth here means spirit. We find the spiritual dimension in those sacred realities of life, common to all, which are the realities of birth and death. These inescapable realities unite us with our fellow human beings in an intense awareness of wisdom and compassion—even with those with whom we may profoundly disagree. Nothing is more natural. Death and birth instinctively move the heart to compassion, to shared grief, to shared joy.

After meditation: “What For?” by Kim Stafford in *SINGER COME FROM AFAR* (Pasadena: Red Hen Press, 2021), p. 122.

## ***What For?***

*What is beauty for—*

*sunset searing my soul*

*without thought or plan?*

*Dawn green beauty, bee hum honey,*

*stone in hand so silky the long sea*

*worked centuries to ravish?  
And what for pain—thorn  
in heart for my hurt child,  
dumb ache for my brother gone  
thirty years, slow burn of disgrace  
when I fail at what I am to do: to see  
my country bruised and torn?  
So, to make good things—  
a song, a kind act, a friendship—  
feed on beauty at every turn.  
And to make truth, feed on sorrows,  
gnash their salty structures,  
bite the bitter rind.*

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