

Dwelling in the Light Forever

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The pandemic has reminded us of our inherent solidarity as a human family. It has also exposed forces at work—like bad government, greedy money-makers and the obscene gulf between rich and poor—that demand correction or punishment. As a sign of our unreality the stock markets are producing great wealth for some while the real economy is crashing.

Everyone feels the effects of global crisis; and everyone feels global warming. As hard wake-up calls, these experiences recall us to the unity of humanity and the oneness between humanity and the natural world. Any glimpse into this unity and the oneness is grace: a moment of true contemplation, a lighting flash of wisdom, a healing touch on the wound of our ignorance. Even if it is painful, we want more of what we experience in these brief moments. Because deep down, even as we feel the futility of personal isolation or of collective nationalism unleashing chaos and pain, we want to know what these experiences of oneness, these moments of grace, mean.

After meditation: “The Place” by Paul Zimmer in *CROSSING TO SUNLIGHT REVISITED: New and Selected Poems* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), p. 68.

The Place

Once in your life you pass
Through a place so pure
It becomes tainted even
By your regard, a space
Of trees and air where
Dusk comes as perfect ripeness.
Here the only sounds are
Sighs of rain and snow,
Small rustlings of plants
As they unwrap in twilight.
This is where you will go
At last when coldness comes.
It is something you realize

When you first see it,

But instantly forget.

At the end of your life

You remember and dwell in

Its faultless light forever.