

The Singular Gift

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On Friday we face[d] the deepest repression of our psyche, the fact and fear of mortality, the terror of absolute loss and abandonment. We learn[ed] that in facing it we can touch a meaning that opens a door through which we must pass but which is still a passage into the unknown. On Saturday we rest[ed] on the horizon of that meaning, balanced between loss and finding. We are uncertain, even unconvinced, yet we have not closed ourselves to the possibility – the possibility that rises in the early morning from the nowhere of the tomb into the flooding reality of new life.

After meditation: “Hope” by Lisel Mueller in *ALIVE TOGETHER* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1996), p.

HOPE

It hovers in dark corners
before the lights are turned on,
it shakes sleep from its eyes
and drops from mushroom gills,
it explodes in the starry heads

of dandelions turned sages,
it sticks to the wings of green angels
that sail from the tops of maples.

It sprouts in each occluded eye
of the many-eyed potato,
it lives in each earthworm segment
surviving cruelty,
it is the motion that runs
from the eyes to the tail of a dog,
it is the mouth that inflates the lungs
of the child that has just been born.

It is the singular gift
we cannot destroy in ourselves,
the argument that refutes death,
the genius that invents the future,
all we know of God.

It is the serum which makes us swear
not to betray one another;
it is in this poem, trying to speak.

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