

Jim Thompson's Spiritual Poetry Class #64

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

5 pm PT

Dear Friends:

Three poems that seem very different from each other but I like all of them. I hope you will also.

- **I let the flies bite me when I meditate** by Nick Demski. Intrigued by "...this abundance / which hath bowed our back..." Especially so after having almost finished *The Ministry for the Future* by Kim Stanley Robinson, his amazing look at a scenario of how we might make the best of a really bad situation with climate change.
- **Another Reason I Don't Keep a Gun in the House** by Billy Collins. This is a fun poem. And, of course, we have a neighbor dog that seems to never stop barking...and wasn't there a movie about a dog named Beethoven?
- **The Cure for It All** by Julia Fehrenbacher, a lovely and wise poem combining meditation and dogs.

Here's the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81374816274?pwd=eG1PRUxoWC9iTjFaTHFBNTBrNkIvQT09>

Passcode: **704824**

Note: This link and passcode are good for classes through October 27, 2021.

+ + Jim

I let the flies bite me when I meditate

—Nick Demske

because I am a blood abundance
and it is said that when you yield an amplitude
it is right to give
of the surplus
and who among us would not bring forth
an teardrop of hemoglobin
if it would feed a starving beggar
and who among us could not afford
to spare a raindrop in the flash flood

O I saith unto thee,
it is this abundance
which hath bowed our backs
this bounty—

like a price
on our heads
which hang —

but here have come
mine guardian angels
to alight upon me
and banquet,

to sit at meat
and to make my burden
light

Nick Demsky reading:

<https://dcs.megaphone.fm/POETS7639379333.mp3?key=0856ed5f25eee67b80fba017f730307d>

Another Reason I Don't Keep a Gun in the House

—Billy Collins

The neighbors' dog will not stop barking.
He is barking the same high, rhythmic bark
that he barks every time they leave the house.
They must switch him on on their way out.

The neighbors' dog will not stop barking.
I close all the windows in the house
and put on a Beethoven symphony full blast
but I can still hear him muffled under the music,
barking, barking, barking,

and now I can see him sitting in the orchestra,
his head raised confidently as if Beethoven
had included a part for barking dog.

When the record finally ends he is still barking,
sitting there in the oboe section barking,
his eyes fixed on the conductor who is
entreating him with his baton

while the other musicians listen in respectful
silence to the famous barking dog solo,
that endless coda that first established
Beethoven as an innovative genius.

The Cure for It All

–Julia Fehrenbacher

Go gently today, don't hurry
or think about the next thing. Walk
with the quiet trees. Can you believe
how brave they are—how kind? Model your life
after theirs. Blow kisses
at yourself in the mirror

especially when
you think you've messed up. Forgive
yourself for not meeting your unreasonable
expectations. You are human, not
God – *don't be so arrogant.*

Praise fresh air,
clean water, good dogs. Spin
something from joy. Open
a window, even if
it's cold outside. Sit. Close
your eyes. Breathe. Allow

the river
of it all to pulse
through eyelashes
fingertips, bare toes. Breathe in
breathe out. Breathe until

you feel
your bigness, until the sun
rises in your veins. Breathe
until you stop needing
anything
to be different.