

## Tiny yet Powerful

Tat-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat!  
Tat-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat-tat!  
A woodpecker, at a short distance,  
Was busy at work searching for  
Insects for its nourishment.  
The tapping was quite tiny in the air,  
Yet so distinctive,  
It could not be ignored.

Presently, very boldly,  
A large gaggle of boisterous  
Canada geese swooped across the  
Sky, loud honking almost drowning  
Out the woodpecker's tat-tap.  
Yet after all the loud fussing above,  
The geese flying off,  
Woodpecker's tap remained.

Three days in a row this did  
Happen, making me wonder  
If this natural phenomenon  
Held a gentle message for me.  
The woodpeckers and the geese  
Are both creations of God; so are we.  
Geese flew past, landed  
Somewhere all together.

Though their loud, raucous honking  
Sounded like irritated  
Anger, it was a temporary  
Elation of their unity,  
In flight, dominating the  
Scene, temporarily, before landing  
Elsewhere to graze in  
Union, no longer loud.

What had seemed dangerous, as  
If through broken windows they'd attack me,  
Faded away, leaving just the  
Purposeful tapping of the  
Woodpecker harvesting its nourishment,  
Its tapping tempo's  
Repetition calming.

Living through an actual  
Attack on our Capitol,  
Through actual broken windows, had  
Put me on edge. Unsettling.  
Fear for the future of our  
Country. Hope no one would gloss over it.  
Deeply troubled by  
Loud, angry rioters.

Maybe, maybe, the raucous,  
Loud shouting of the angry  
Protesters that led to violence  
In our Capitol will prove to  
Be temporary, even  
Though anger, once stirred up, is difficult  
To quell. Oh how can  
We de-flame such anger?

Hoping and praying for an  
End to the violence, and  
A backing-down of supporters of  
Tearing our country apart, has  
Drained much of my energy,  
So that what, previously, had seemed just  
Noisy, began to  
Feel, somehow, ominous.

And then there it was, three days  
Repeated: Steady tapping  
In search of food, drowned out by angry,  
Loud honking that faded away,  
Followed by the continued  
Purposeful tapping. Three days in a row.  
No more. Three times. It  
Summoned my attention.

And how natural it felt  
That a lesson should come from  
Nature itself. Though un-parallel  
Situations, one with, and one  
Without, actual danger,  
The steadiness of the woodpecker's work  
Seemed to indicate  
The value of good works.

Good, steady work. Work done with  
Positive purpose, with love.  
Work that builds up, rather than destroys.  
Life-affirming work. Work that spreads  
Health and harmony. We are  
All God's creations. We must do our best  
To put aside anger  
And work together.

Caring, life-affirming acts  
Might seem tiny in the scheme  
Of things, yet they have the power to  
Summon healing amidst current  
Dangerous divisions in  
Our country, arcing us toward social  
Justice, toward a  
Loving community.

May God guide us.

**Bonnie E. Okun**  
**January 2021**