

Poem for Good Friday, April 2

Fishing in the Keep of Silence

by Linda Gregg

There is a hush now while the hills rise up
and God is going to sleep. He trusts the ship
of Heaven to take over and proceed beautifully
as he lies dreaming in the lap of the world.
He knows the owls will guard the sweetness
of the soul in their massive keep of silence,
looking out with eyes open or closed over
the length of Tomales Bay that the herons
conform to, whitely broad in flight, white
and slim in standing. God, who thinks about
poetry all the time, breathes happily as He
repeats to Himself: There are fish in the net,
lots of fish this time in the net of the heart.

I (Adams Wofford) cannot say what this poem means, only that I like it-- that God would trust owls to guard the soul and the words about fish in the net of the heart. Something beyond words is conveyed, but I cannot say what it is.

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Psalm by *Wistawa Szymborska*

Oh, the leaky boundaries of man-made states!
How many clouds float past them with impunity;
how much desert sand shifts from one land to another;
how many mountain pebbles tumble onto foreign soil
in provocative hops!

Need I mention every single bird that flies in the face of frontiers
or alights on the roadblock at the border?
A humble robin—still, its tail resides abroad
while its beak stays home. If that weren't enough, it won't stop bobbing!

Among innumerable insects, I'll single out only the ant
between the border guard's left and right boots
blithely ignoring the questions "Where from?" and "Where to?"

Oh to register in detail, at a glance, the chaos
prevailing on every continent!
Isn't that a privet on the far bank
smuggling its hundred-thousandth leaf across the river?
And who but the octopus, with impudent long arms,
would disrupt the sacred bounds of territorial waters?

And how can we talk of order overall
when the very placement of the stars
leaves us doubting just what shines for whom?

Not to speak of the fog's reprehensible drifting!
And dust blowing all over the steppes
as if they hadn't been partitioned!
And the voices coasting on obliging airwaves,
that conspiratorial squeaking, those indecipherable mutters!

Only what is human can truly be foreign.
The rest is mixed vegetation, subversive moles, and wind.

Wisława is Polish poet whose intelligent and empathic explorations of philosophical, moral, and ethical issues won her the [Nobel Prize for Literature](#) in

1996. This poem seems to fit with our concern for the people at our southern border trying desperately to get into the US and those in our country who have to hide so they aren't expelled. Foreigners, immigrants, human beings...who are desperately concerned about the safety and well-being of their families in their chaotic homelands.
~ Marge Miles