

Wilderness House Literary Review 14/2

Peter Scacco

Soft place waiting

Dripping day of fog
of quiet places hidden
in the morning mist—

The mind gazes inward
unclouded by promises
from days of dazzling youth
and looks upon a landscape
of remembered fragments
where there is no desire
to lift the veil on the past
no need for brilliant suns
to illuminate those things
that are best seen in dreams.

So to your bright worlds go
keeping in mind as you do
that we do not all walk
on the same resplendent path
that there is a hushed place
in the shadows waiting
where we may yet see ourselves
in the soft glow of dawn
and our yesterdays remain
comforting as the fog.

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Winter prints

Twilight on the snowy trail
serpentine rows of prints
like streams of congealed silver
penetrate the leafless woods
only to be obscured
by the next winter storm.

Tangled histories lost in time—
visions of bright snows of youth
when I passed in wonder
unseen and alone at dawn
creating pristine patterns
till a new inundation
concealed me in pure white—
a hundred times I was lost
a hundred times reborn.

Now I go with wary step
unsure if those childhood scenes
are mere illusions
burnished by remembrance
of a sanctified past—
now in place of clear-cut prints
I leave behind only traces
of uncertainty with vague words
on how elusive the past is
and how impenetrable
the isolation of time.

Philosopher's Walk

Many years having passed
I went again down that path
alongside those gentle slopes
where gated temples rise
above the morning mist
their gardens of raked gravel
in geometric patterns
surrounding weathered rocks
and ancient cedars huddle
in great stands of solitude
hushed in endless remembrance
of the seasons of youth.

Echoes of my footfalls
measured my years lost to time
within an ageless landscape
that seemed just as before.
Yet something had subtly changed
and beholding those sites
that phoenix-crowned pavilion
gold-leafed panels of cranes
the purifying sand
I wondered what had happened
why these timeless monuments
appeared to have altered.

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No— what was different
was what I had brought to them
since I had first ventured there—
the sense of all my years
enveloping itself
around all that I perceived.
And I let the day slip by
as I slowly drifted
to a place beyond my eyes
a place within myself
a place amid the shadows
where dwell the seasons past.