

## Selected Letters of David Myatt

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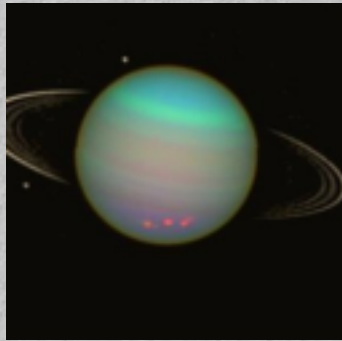
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## Introduction

Included in this volume are a selection of letters that David Myatt has written between the years 2002 and 2008, divided into two sections. These letters reveal a different side of his character - poet, Gnostic, Nature-loving mystic - to his more well known public personae, deriving as these public personae did from his political and religious peregrinations. It is in these letters that the "real" David Myatt speaks, shorn of his varied, and changing, public *personae*.

The majority of the letters between 2002 and 2005 were handwritten, and addressed to me, beginning with a letter he wrote when he was living in a tent in the hills and fells of Cumbria, England, in what was one of his several periods as a vagabond, with this particular period following on from the break-up of his marriage to his third wife, in the Fall of 2001. Many of the later letters, included here (2006-2008) were also written to me; a few to his friend RM; and several others to another lady correspondent of his, who was and who is a friend of RM. A few of these later letters to these other correspondents were in the form of e-mails.

It is my view that these letters are important for not only a correct understanding of Myatt himself, but also for understanding the development of his Numinous Way. Many of the later letters are intensely personal - and remarkably honest - and several deal with his feelings following the suicide, in May 2006, of his fiancée. It is also clear from many of these letters that, already by early 2002 (as the following excerpt shows), he had already begun to develop empathy and compassion as a basis for The Numinous Way and was quite aware of his own mistakes:

"I have no music now - no Bach, Brahms, Schubert - to connect me to that world which entwined us then, that Summer, with its intimations of the greatest sadness, the greatest joy; but there are memories, yes there are memories which bring the tears of such sadness and joy and which remind me of how much I do not know, how many times I have been wrong, and of how far we all have to go to reach where we can reach given the faculties of empathy, reason and honour which we can and indeed must develop. Mea culpa; mea culpa; mea maxima culpa." *The Greatest Joy, The Greatest Sadness*

The letters thus reveal his spiritual and mystical odyssey, which odyssey has now ended, it seems, with his complete rejection of his political past and of his more recent involvement with what he circumlocutiously describes as "a particular Way of Life, which Way many consider a religion". (1)

The letters are reproduced complete with Myatt's sometimes idiosyncratic spelling. In many of his early

letters to me, he gave no specific date, or address, only general indications, such as, for date, *Early June*, or *Nearing Summer Solstice*, or *One Sunday Morning in July*, and, for address, usually the English county of his current residence, or, less frequently, a descriptive one, such as *A Crag Overlooking Ullswater*. Frequently, he would also provide a title, underlined - such as *Preco prehemencie*.

I have omitted some personal comments in some the letters (often at the beginning), and the opening salutation - which almost always began along the lines of *My Dear [ Julie ]* - and the closing words, which almost always were either *With Good Wishes* or, less frequently, *Regards*, and even, occasionally (if he was being particularly effusive), some flowery expression such as *May many beautiful emanations surround you and bring you joy...* He signed off, simply and most often, with *D* or, less frequently, with *DWM*.

In the published texts, I have often added Myatt's name - usually DW Myatt - at the end of each letter, as individual letters may be, and have been, re-published elsewhere, via the medium of the Internet. In addition, the letters are not in strict chronological order.

JR Wright  
Oxford  
May 2009 AD

*Footnote:*

(1) I have touched, quite briefly, on this recent return, by him, to his very much revised philosophy of The Numinous Way in an [Addendum](#) (dated April 2009) to my *The Promethean Peregrinations of David Myatt*. I shall endeavor, in the near future, to publish some of my recent correspondence with Myatt which touches upon the matter of his struggle with his perceived duty to abide by an oath he gave, on his honor, when he became a Muslim. It was this duty which, for many years, apparently held him back from publicly embracing his own philosophy of the Numinous Way, which philosophy he now - in the Introduction to his *The Numinous Way of Life: Empathy, Compassion, and Honour* - admits "expresses my own conclusions about life." See also Myatt's [A Change of Perspective](#).

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Note by JRW, March 2003 AD: The following is taken from a handwritten letter, by Myatt, written in 2002 AD and addressed to me. He dated it *One Very Cold Afternoon in Spring*.

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## **The Greatest Joy, The Greatest Sadness**

It is a very cold day at the start of my second week living in this tent. Last night it was so cold that there was ice on my beard and the inside of the tent, and I could not sleep. Warmth came only by walking to the top of a nearby hill, hours before dawn. But it was good, to be there, in the frosty silence, viewing the dome of stars and wondering about our future as a species. Will we be ever be "out there" - among those stars? Will we ever reach the worlds around, the life upon, some of them? This prospect, the very stars themselves, certainly put our petty personal and Earth-based squabbles into perspective.

As for myself, the days of coldness have worn me down, a little, and I am again like I once was, decades ago, at peace in my homeless world: enjoying the simple joy that a warming mug of tea brings when I sit, on a plastic bag, outside my tent and listen to the silence. There is plenty of time to reflect upon the past. I have been both *above time* and *in time* - to use the words of Savitri Devi - enjoying and seeking violent action-in-the-world, and the challenges and stirring of the blood, the soul, that such action, born of duty, brings, and yet also seeking and finding a beauty, a contentment - at least for a while - in peaceful, numinous Nature, while always in the past returning, in some way, to the struggle because this struggle vitalizes, making me treasure even more the beauty, the numen, of the world. Never sufficiently *against time* to remain with action, and yet never sufficiently *above time* to scorn the doing of deeds.

There is beauty, certainly, here in this coldness and rural place where my every breath can be seen and where I have to stop often to warm the hand which holds this pen. There is certainly an intimation of such beauty, such numinosity, in some women: a beauty which many times has brought me to tears as I shared with a woman one of those sometimes strange wordless moments when, together, we become more than we are, were, as individuals, as if, together, we are an intimation of the stage of human evolution which awaits. I often feel that some women embody the beauty, the numinosity, the joy, the sensuality, of Nature; as if they are Nature made manifest - an aspect of Nature's living being, a presencing, and one which, alas, so few it seems seem to know let alone appreciate.

And yet: I have always returned to this other, ordinary world of involvement, of action. Was it only duty - a duty to strive to make my vision of a better, more empathic, more honourable, world real - which drew me back? Or was it also that by so returning I knew, and treasured this other, numinous, world which one day we might make real here on Earth? Was this a knowing as when we have loved one

person so deeply we miss their very presence and only realize how much we loved them, needed them, should have treasured them, when they were gone: when for some reason - often our own fault - their love for us was no more and we had to learn to be alone, again?

Will I ever, for more than a few months, a few years, and as I often dream and desire, live only in the world of the numen? Will I, for this, need to be alone, isolated, as I am now? Distanced from people by a physical distance, a rural isolation, and distanced in my very being, as if I am some strange alien from another world who finds it difficult to be enclosed in some city or some town or even a vehicle and who, many times, can only be with people for a limited time since I often feel their feelings, their sadness, their hopes, their joys, their anger, their despair, as if they are my own. And if I do so live, in, with, the numen, will it be because I have turned away from duty - too old and burdened by sadness to care about the world - or because I have truly transcended to that compassion, that understanding, that species of time, which, being acausal, is the real genesis of genuine change?

Such ramblings, created by days alone. And are you now my random audience? And do you mind? How many years - well over a decade - since I, by the public then unknown, stumbled into you in the Classics Bookshop that hot humid Summer day in Oxford when the very air sweated us and we went to sit, tree-shaded, by the river to talk of books read, music heard? How many sultry nights since that concert of Vivaldi's Gloria, shared? How many lives have I, you, lived since then? How many stored feelings, impressions, images, memories, waiting for some means of release? How many regrets of what might have been?

I have no music now - no Bach, Brahms, Schubert - to connect me to that world which entwined us then, that Summer, with its intimations of the greatest sadness, the greatest joy; but there are memories, yes there are memories which bring the tears of such sadness and joy and which remind me of how much I do not know, how many times I have been wrong, and of how far we all have to go to reach where we can reach given the faculties of empathy, reason and honour which we can and indeed must develop. *Mea culpa; mea culpa; mea maxima culpa.*

I am so cold now I have to move, and will walk the many miles to post this letter while the daylight lasts...

DW Myatt



**Note by JR Wright, 2002 AD:** The following item is taken from a handwritten letter written by Myatt (in 2002 AD) and addressed to me. It was dated *June, Nearing the Solstice*.

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### **A Retrospective Part One: Beyond God, Toward Empathy**



It seems a long time since we last met, although sitting here, on a hill overlooking beautiful English countryside, on a cloudy Summer's day recollecting the past three decades places that year perhaps in its correct perspective.

Externally, in the year since our last meeting, a lot has changed in my life... Internally, even more has changed, mostly through thinking deeply about the genesis of suffering. Yet my essay *The Origin of the Good* seems now such a feeble attempt to explain what I believe I have understood, especially about suffering and empathy.

Is this review of mine too little, too late? Perhaps only a piece of music by Bach - the opening of the St. John Passion, perhaps? - can express the ineffable sadness I feel. Was it always like this? So little learnt from so much suffering? Will it always be like this, for we human beings?

Years ago, of course, in those Daedalus days of youthful impetuous arrogance that in my case lasted

well into my fourth decade of life, I really did believe that such things as Art, Music, Literature, Natural Philosophy, can if not save us from ourselves at least aid us, upward toward a better understanding. And now? Now I must admit I am not so sure. Five thousand years of such things: and have we, as a species, changed? Have we really understood? And if so, have we acted on the understanding?

In my own case, the answer is mostly no. I did understand, many times, as I did, many times, seek to act upon that understanding. But always, always, I slipped back, downward: down toward causing suffering in others. It was so easy to forget; there were so many distractions. And, yes, this happened despite all my good intentions and all my rhetoric about using one's will.

What is it that I have learnt, discovered? Simple truths about reason, compassion, love, Nature and honour. About the origin of suffering and the need to alleviate suffering. And about how - in our very being - we still seem to need, still yearn for, God, some religion, while yet needing - if we are truly to evolve - to go beyond such apprehension and the ethics deriving from those things.

The truth is that God, that religion, fills a need we have, especially in times of suffering and of remorse. But if I have learnt anything these thirty years past it is that we should look to Reason instead, understanding the effects of our thoughts, our words, our deeds not in terms of some theology or by reference to a revealed ethics or God, but rather in terms of understanding how all life, on this planet and elsewhere, is all related. That is, to have a cosmic perspective: the perspective of Unity, of the connectedness of all existence but without ascribing to ourselves, as either individuals or a species, any special 'Destiny', or any 'revelation' from some supra-human being or deity.

Thus it is that I believe we should strive to judge every 'thing' by whether or not that 'thing' causes or can cause suffering, and by whether or not that 'thing' can alleviate suffering without causing more suffering. This means a compassion, a love, a striving to do good, an avoidance of what is wrong, harmful, to us and other life, but devoid of the concepts of 'sin', of 'rebirth', and of an afterlife earned through our good deeds. It means an *empathy* with all living things; a new cosmic perspective. It means the new Cosmic Ethics which I have often written about these past two years. It means a new way of life derived from these new ethics, from the empathy of the connectiveness of all life, all existence, and a turning-away from the ways, the paths, the religions, of the past: moving-on from Buddhism, from Taoism, from Islam, from Christianity, and modern materialism. On toward the numen of the Cosmos where we view all life, however small, as connected and feel in our very being an empathy with this life, using reason and a non-interventionist science to strive to understand this life, the world, the cosmos, and having always before us some simple rules, based upon honour, to guide us in our daily lives.

Can we human beings do this? I know I have found it very difficult, and find it especially difficult now, bearing in mind recent personal events. But I feel I must continue to try to resist what I understand are the ethics of the past and actually strive to live what I know, what I understand.

It just is easier, especially in times of grief, sadness, suffering, distress and remorse, to believe in God: to hope for salvation, to hope for redemption, to hope for forgiveness, to accept that there is a God-given way or path which we can follow. In such times, we - as I myself have, many times - yearn to have the responsibility, the choices, taken from us. To rely on God is easy.

But this seems to me now really an abrogation of our own responsibility, as human beings. We need to learn to accept our nature, and strive to centre ourselves, moving away from the darkness of our savage animal past toward the light of the cosmos of which we are but a tiny part.

How can we do this? How can we move, upward, toward what may well be the next stage of our evolution, as beings? I believe only by accepting the cosmic perspective: by leaving behind the ethics of the past; by accepting that we are only fully human when we use reason and reason alone to judge things; when we feel an empathy with other life, with Nature, with the cosmos itself.

Many difficult questions remain, such as how to deal with those who actively do harm, who lack honour and empathy; how to make such a cosmic perspective the basis for a new way of living, a new society, and how to express, and keep alive, in such a new way of living - and in an honourable, empathic way - that wonderful diversity of human life, manifest in race and culture? And my essay *Cosmic Ethics in Context* is only a beginning, a mere sketch, and will most probably need some, or a lot of, revision.

But here ends the first part of this review. For it is raining now.....

DWM

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Note by JRW, May 2005 AD : The following is taken from a letter, written by Myatt, and addressed to me. He dated it *Almost Mid-May*.

### **Too Much, Too Soon**

On the trees around - now all almost full in leaf and almost all Oak - the Cuckoo does his rounds, calling from tree to tree to tree.

I lie in the damp long Meadow grass, almost hidden, on this middle morning of almost the middle of May, as begins another beautiful rural English day where warming Sun becomes sometimes hidden by the growing Cumulus clouds and a coolish breeze ripples the grass, wave after wave after slow wave. Here - where the Fox-path of trodden grass is clear among their height and where Bluebells cluster along the hedge which hid the Deer I startled as I walked, slowly, savouring each scent, each sound, each sight.

This is real: this field on this day, and I am once again at peace, here where I sense, know, I belong, and where I can touch, feel, see this belonging. There are no politics here; and nor are such abstracted lifeless things needed. Here I hear the birds calling, tree to tree, bush to bush, hedge to hedge, sky to sky: Thrush, Blackbird, Robin, Skylark... and other songs and calls from birds, and beings, whose generic names I do not know, and do not desire to know. For they all live, each a life which is their life, just as the Oak behind, the fly that warms itself on my boot, are each a life, one nexus of energy, nameless because un-named in their profusion. What if I named them? What if we named them all - from the beginning of their life to their own, individual, ending? Is that too much, too soon?

Yet - not a million miles away people die, killed; are confined, tortured, abused, humiliated, oppressed. No empathy there; no beings of compassion who, having lived, know the knowing of suffering and feel that slowness of honour, light to a night, as a crescent moon at clear Dusk, bringing perhaps some thought for, some feeling of, the worlds beyond - beyond the pain, the suffering, that still endures, for no reason.

There is no realness - there, in such places. Only ideas, binding, where sight is not the sight of breeze rippling grass, and where feeling is not the feeling of warm Sun on face, hands, arms, peaceful following the cold dampness of Winter. No - there there is only the seeing of Forms, created, abstracted, which seek to, and which do, restrict, constrain, distort, subdue, destroy the life that lives, the living which is - the lifes which are - the myriad nexions presented here on one planet among so many billions of stars.

Will it end? Yes, such suffering should. Perhaps it is just one cloud, transient, obscuring this one warming giving star which is our Sun? But I do not think so: so many clouds, so many thousands of years... And thus is even this one small missive of mine too much, too soon: too late?

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, July 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Sunday Morning in July*.

## One Sunday Morning in July

This field-side pond is less than half its normal size, dried and murky-green through the warm, dry, June, and the resident Coot clacks in alarm as I, not so quietly it seems, approach on this hot Sunday morning of an English Summer.

Around the edges, scores, hundreds, of two-winged flies hop, buzz, skip, dance, to fan and display their narrow, spotted, wings. There is a pattern to their movement, revealed as I wait, and watch - so many of them their sounds combine, a low drone below the leaf-breeze rustle. The edges of this pond are partially shaded by Ask, Oak and that large oak broken branch, clingingly attached to its life-giving centuries old hedge-dwelling trunk, a branch whose trailing parts are half-in, half-out, of the water: leafy, green, toward the branch's top, and dead where it lies, in, just above, that still drying murky water.

There is pain from two broken ribs as I sit amid the grass, one yard of four Fox-footprints from the edge, chewing on a juicy stalk of grass. There is Sun to warm, heal; insects, to come, go; a white butterfly to descend to briefly drink; grasshoppers, birds, to call. Time flows, unmeasured, unmissed - the drifted sound of the village Church bells, two miles distant; a small but growing Summer Cumulus cloud to briefly dispel the warmth of Sun, intimating the cold, darker, seasons, to come...

Such pain a reminder; and I have no excuses if I fail to change my life. So much learnt these past two years of wandering and of work. There can be no harming and no one harmed - I, we, have will, knowledge, empathy, enough, to be that which we should, must be; to grow as we must grow, up from the empathy, born of honour, toward a maturity of life; up from a simple dwelling where we are a harmony of consciousness with the land.

I smile, because I am not alone. Here, there is time, quietness, calmness, empathy, life, enough to know, feel, the Life beyond our life, the Life which bore us with so much wordless hope which we, selfish children, so stupidly, ignorantly, scorn. One tree, more or less; one human bludgeoned by words, deeds, streaming forth unchecked; one Coot killed for sport; one field lost to build one part of one road joining one empathyless place to another. One more person tortured, killed, starved, maimed through one more lifeless idea carried, like a deadly virus, by one more talking upright-walking childish being.

There are no excuses for our failures - we have knowledge enough. Thousand year upon thousand year

of suffering, death, destruction, torment, torture; thousand year upon thousand year of music, literature, memoirs, poetry, art; thousand year upon thousand year of individuals striving, learning, as I have learnt, strived, beyond, between, the light and the dark There are no excuses - we have ability, potential, will, enough to discover, find, know, to become the empathy, the honour, we need, genesis as these two are of the higher, numinous, life which awaits. There can be no more excuses.

So I lie still in the warming grass; peaceful in my pain while the hot Sun of this Sunday lasts.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, September 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *Nearing Mid-September*.

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### **Nearing Mid-September**

A glorious warm day of full, hot, Sun and I have been lying in the warm still growing greening grass by the edge of one field at the back of the Farm - sometimes asleep - for what is probably an hour. And yet, I still do not know.

Beneath and around the old tall Oak, acorns have fallen, eaten or stored, or both, by Squirrels, for I can find and see only the top which once held them on the tree. The small pond with its incumbent still living branches, is smaller, greener now, home to algae and slime, and the large Dragonfly hovers above the greenish water, to fly around to return to hover. A fly - or something, for I cannot quite see from here - passes it by and the Dragonfly darts around, chasing it away from the water. It is a chase, for I see this happen twice, three times. Then the Dragonfly is gone, toward the bushes, the branches.

In the field, a single tall Cornflower amid the yellow buttercups, the purple Clover, the Vetchling and Hawksbeard. Field-walking, I can see the Church in the two-mile distant village whose bell I can hear, here, come Sunday morning. And now, at last, I am here in the neglected one-acre strip whose fruit-giving, flowering hedges have been untrimmed for years.

But already the desecration has started. For, five fields to my left, is a lane which winds toward an orchard, a Farm, whose fields have hedges newly, murderously, flailed by a brutish machine. The berries, the fruits, the dormant buds - all gone. No wonder there that each year the life-giving, life-holding, life-sheltering, hedge dies a little more.

Alas, I have no land, no field or fields, to call my own where I can tend and care as life, field-grown, field-sown, field-fare, should and must be tended with care born from dwelling, feeling, there. I only work, toiling, for another, to keep me fed, housed, clothed, tired and, sometimes, content, as now where two small brown butterflies spiral and dance around the greening growing grass where I have sat to sit



crossed legged writing this, chewing on a sweet stalk of grass.

So warm the Sun I can forget what should-be in the what-is of warmth: in the gentle music of leaves, breeze-brought. A few small cumulus clouds drift West to East over the nearby wooded hill, and I know, sense, feel, that here in this field, under this Sun, is Paradise.

My desires, hopes, dreams, have been a distraction. All that is good, beautiful, right, is here and I might need only a small plot of land, a woman as wife, a shack, to make my world complete. Thus it is that I have again the knowing of what I should know. But have I the patience to stay, enduring the calm to the peace - knowing, but bereft of woman, shack, field, faith? Or have I to go, must I go, to live to settle to marry she, in that hot distant land, who loves me?

So I settle myself down again to sleep in the warm greening growing grass. But there is no rest, only a world beyond brought briefly alive by change in wind - for I can hear the festering vehicles upon the festering road two - more - miles distant. There is no Paradise, there. Can I strive to make some difference? Should I strive? Should I change - exchange my peace, my lonely Paradise here, on Earth - to strive against the suffering, the tyranny, the wrong, that blights and festers on this Earth?

There is no answer, even in the Ruddy Darter that here, quite far from water, skims the greening growing blades of grass.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, July 2002 AD: The following is taken from a handwritten letter recently written by Myatt, and addressed to me. It was dated *Toward the end of June*.

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## **Memories of Beautiful Things**

A time to recollect, sitting here on a warm sunny day almost at the top of a high hill overlooking a valley where a road funnels traffic toward and from the lake that is two hills distant.

A time of review, of over four decades remembered: wonderful sights and sounds, speaking to me now in words of wisdom about the beautiful richness, the beautiful diversity of this planet which is our home. And I remember all these beautiful things despite the sadness brought by having so many times experienced the other, ugly, dishonourable side of life. For it is the memory of these many, many beautiful moments that I treasure, reminding me as they do of our humanity, often shared, often expressed, and often bringing hope amid the tragedy, the dishonour and the suffering that blights our human history and often our own lives.

A few, a very few of the so many, so briefly and poorly recalled.....

I remember sitting near a river one hot, balmy evening as the sun set, in India listening to the sounds of tabla and bansuri while people went about their lives: children playing, women cooking, men talking, a young bare-chested boy cycling standing up on black bicycle that was far too big for him. Even now, I can if I close my eyes see the beautiful colours cast by a descending sun and the dusty atmosphere, as I imagine I can still smell that poignant, evokative, smell of mingled scent of flowers, spicy cooking, parched soil, cow dung and dry air.

I remember, decades earlier, sitting by a camp-fire near an African lake as night came with its manifold sounds, and men, barefoot, and some holding spears, sang and danced, my world then each day as it came and went as I travelled with my father toward some distant hills.

I remember swimming out from a small beach in Malaysia where two small fishing boats were cast upon the sand, into what seemed then the vastness of the South China Sea while a hot sun burnt down, just to see how far I could swim, and at what seemed a long way out treading water to look back before lying on my back for a while, serenely happy. I remember the village nearby, and the friendly people.

I remember cycling along a dusty track toward Farafra Oases nearing exhaustion, with my desert-sun-bleached Australian bush hat held onto to my head against the sandy breeze by a makeshift chinstrap, when a four-wheel-drive truck stopped, its Arab driver, sole-occupant, greeting me warmly in broken

English, and offering me water, water-melons, large tomatoes and a lift which I, stubborn to my goal, politely refused.

I remember the woman whose home was a hut in the African bush who nursed me back to health as I lay fevered, and the village elder, tall, thin, gaunt, whose wife was so many times larger surrounded as she always seemed to be by a gaggle of her own children. I remember the persistent flies, and the sparse food, shared. And the happiness as health once again became my friend, and the joy of just watching as a new hot day began ending the bushful sounds of night, and the sad death of a baby, newly born, bringing the people together in a shared mostly silent mourning when eyes spoke more than words.

I remember the cool shade near a courtyard near a Madrassh in the Punjab, drinking very sweet tea made with hot milk served by a smiling boy, while a bearded, turbaned elderly man with such gentle eyes spoke in reverential words of happenings in the desert sands of Arabia, many centuries ago.

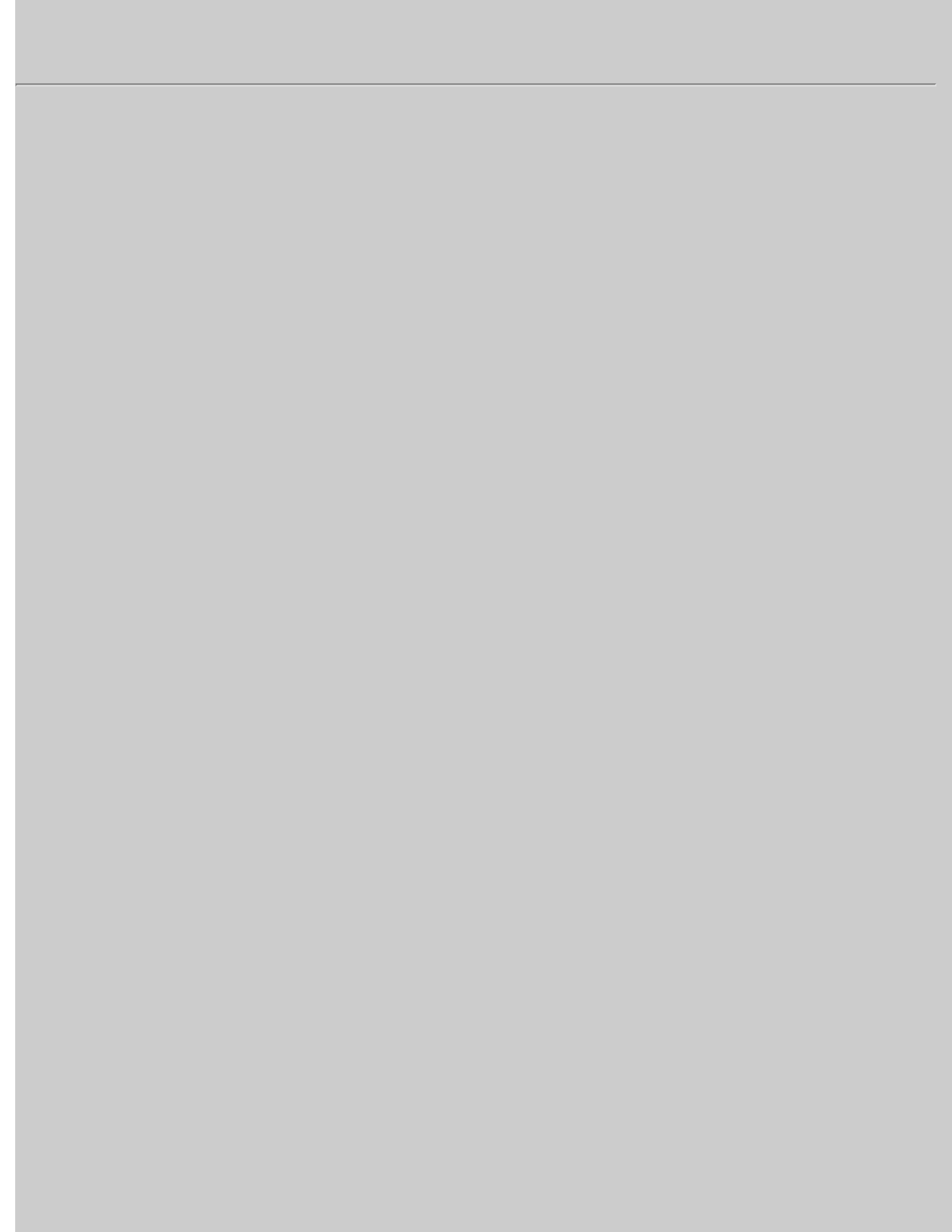
I remember the beauty of an English woman's face, and her scent, her eyes, as she stood by the door I had knocked upon one bitter snowy winter's evening when I, a tramp, was in need of water. I remember the sounds of her family, inside, and how the warmth of that house seeped out to me, and how I went to sleep that night, cramped up, hungry and huddled in all my clothes, visualizing her face, her smile which brought me an inner warmth amid the bleak, dark coldness.

I remember the flower-perfumed awe-inducing silent Temple stillness of the humid afternoon air on the edge of a city in Asia broken by the chanting of Buddhist monks. I remember the perfected garden in the Far East whose trees, flowers, running water, shade and sun seemed then as now to express the quiet, almost serene, essence of that Way I was then learning from the master of that garden.

I remember the beautiful young Sari-clad Indian woman with green eyes I saw one morning while I stood on a corner of a busy noise-full street of a busier Indian city deciding which way I should go: her brief smile a tumult in my head until I rushed across the road, oblivious to traffic, to try without success to find her...

There is much that is beautiful  
But nothing that surpasses the beauty some women  
Reveal  
Through their eyes

D.W. Myatt



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**Note by JRW, December 2003 AD:** The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, sent to me. He dated it *Early December* and gave it the title *Preco preheminencie*.

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### **Preco preheminencie**

These are the tears that I have cried, that I should have cried - tears which unbidden fall as I listen to *Preco preheminencie* by Dunstable; and tears which express my longing for that beauty, that love, that ineffable goodness which sometimes someone somewhere has presenced on this grieving Earth.

This is what I am - these tears, born of both suffering and joy, and bearing as they do in memories of light and dark the life which was, is, mine. This is what I am - that quiet look of love; that desire to transcend beyond the moment to where exists a purity of being.

Why has the learning not been learnt? Am I with my life an analogy, an answer? Seeking, questing, plunging often without any thought, reason or plan, into life, knowing thus that exhilaration of existence as when one early Winter's morning I fastly cycled on roads of snow newly iced by a night of bright moon to give to she whom I then loved just one letter of love - one hour, one moment of existence, of perfect bliss, of perfect union of body, thought, spirit, soul, as when I stubborn beyond myself grimly bore my complaining body on through the stark deathly heat of the desert to reach just one more goal in two weeks of tortured goals whose ending left me briefly suspended between life and death, my being then transcending out as if I had become the desert, the Sun, the water that saved me, the people who in their simple act of kindness took me in and brought me even then to an insight of understanding of their culture, their Prophet, their God.

Seeking, questing, as when I gently cared for a patient, dying, and listened as he told of how he had endured years in those Trenches of stalemate war. There, in a bedside drawer were his medals, brought by his wife - and that last night I stood watching, unseen, as she briefly took them out as he rasped, to breathe his last breath of life.

Seeking, questing - as when I sat on the edge of the bed of she whom I loved who loved me, and held her as she drifted into that last and never-ending sleep. Seeking, questing., forgetting as when, less than a year later I was travelling, writing, speaking words of chaos and of hate, as if hoping such words might change what-was for what I hoped might-be, forgetting, forgetting the pain, the anger, the suffering, even the deaths, caused. Had she, my love, died in my arms in vain? Seeking, questing, as when years later I, grieving, sorrowed as my then wife became troubled, ill, and I knew my blame; forgetting - as when, less than six months later, in a land of hot Sun I was again preaching death, destruction, as if it might again change what-was to what I in arrogance believed should-be...

So much known, seen, felt - so many tears, insights along the Way, and so many times when those tears, insights, were lost. It was as if I had to start all over again, and re-learn what life, myself, in-between,

had forced me to forget. As if my questing life each year had to shed its slowly learnt wisdom to vigourously grow, up, upwards to where the pain of remembering merged with the joy of passion; upward, ever upward beyond and between the light and the dark. And I am, was, like them - those who for thousands of years acted to strive to change what-was to what they believed should-be, who experienced, who learned, who forgot and who so acted again. I - the deed; the redemption and the blame. I, they, we - in our tears, our understanding a beginning of what we should and can be.

Seeking, questing, forgetting until I finally distilled the essence - which is of empathy and honour.

Yesterday - as I myself was held, touched, kissed by a woman - I was blessed through her, with her, by her, with another intimation of the divine, another presencing of the numinous, and all I can do to force myself to remember is create these words, only these words, born by tears; born of divine music, presencing: such a poor recompense for five thousand years of suffering, seeking, questing, forgetting, pain, and toil.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, December 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *Towards the Winter Solstice*.

I know now what I always knew but sometimes forgot - and this is that empathy is the essence, the key, the beginning and the end. There is now for me - there can only now be for me - the tolerance, the humanity, the honour, of The Numinous Way, of a way of life that does not consciously seek to do harm and which does not strive to constrict life through and into abstract forms. This is the message, the goal, achieved after nearly forty years of venturing forth into and beyond the light and the dark

But these are words, just words. What, of my words, are valuable? Some poems, perhaps...

### Here I Am, Waiting

Here I am, waiting, while the cold night grows ever darker  
And the thin crescent moon  
Disappears.

There were the moments of hope - of excuses  
As to why she did not call  
But the hours, the slow hours, dragged them away  
Until he was left, alone, bent, desperate but not desperate  
Because unwilling even then to fully believe  
His loss.

He loved her so much; he had loved her so much -  
She, of the weeks of passionate new love -  
And he held, again, her card, reading, reading until the tears came

To my darling, I love you

What was there left? Where was the future they shared, deeply  
In those weeks when three decades of mutual sorrow, loneliness, hope  
Came together through embracing arms, hours of kisses  
And that intimacy of touch?  
Where was the joyous desire that left him trembling  
When he had stood at her door, waiting,

And she, arriving, threw her arms around him  
Holding him so close with her passion, her love,  
That he closed his eyes in tears knowing, knowing, his dreams were there  
Embodied in her flesh?

Where? Where? Where the promise promising so much that never was  
Never now could be  
Fulfilled.  
Where?

But she was gone, taken by an accident of life  
As he became taken, enfolded, by sorrow because of her loss  
Until, broken, the life left him  
To leave only the shell, only the physical shell  
Longing for death.

What? What would, could, he do?  
Only exist, ambling, alone, in some wood, on some hill,  
Seeking no comfort and finding no comfort, uncaring of himself -  
Except when the hills, the clouds, the Sun, the trees  
Their life  
Came unto him as he the bearded tramp waited  
For death,  
For then for a moment but only a moment he might be at peace  
Amid the life that was their life.

DW Myatt



Note by JRW, December 2002AD: The following is taken from a hand written letter, by Myatt, addressed to me. It was dated *Nearing the Winter Solstice*.

## A Learning

What has been learnt, these past thirty-five and more years involving as those years did a great diversity of experiences, of travels? Once again I feel - as I sit here leaning against a centuries old leaf-bare Oak tree on a hill between a copse and stream in that rural England I love - the need to reflect upon that past that contained so much love, so much hatred, so much violence, some compassion and many deaths.

There is a road, three miles distant, whose traffic I cannot hear and, under this warmish sun, days before Winter Solstice, it is easy to ignore for moments the intrusive modern world I loathe. There, between hedgerow bramble and muddy field, scrapings in scraggy grass where hungry rabbits have dug for roots. There, by my booted feet, the leaf litter which, a few moments ago, I was sure moved, a little, as some unseen living thing ventured forth before this bearded Barbour-coated being moved to reach into a pocket for some paper and a pen.

Now, although I have a home - or at least a room in a farmhouse on a farm - and work to keep me fed, I am alone, again, and there is a bumbling yearning for those days this year when freedom was a tent: then, before I fell in love, again. There seems, in memory, such a simple warmth, there, for I can so easily forget the many cold days of rain; the sleepless nights; the weariness; the boredom that bore down upon me and, more than once, almost crushed me. Only so many ways to spend those long, those very long, rain-soaked hours and dismal, dull, unwarm days. Only so many ways to think; to rest; only so many miles to walk before hunger, fatigue, sameness, set in after which I would gratefully almost endearingly embrace sleep. Often, miles walked with aching head because walking was at least something to do even when there was no where in particular to go, no goal, nothing to strive for. And yet: the sunny days of languid softness redeemed them all. One warm or hot day - cloud or landscape watching from atop some hill, when I would lie upon my coat in warm or warming grass, while birds sang, or the music of warm wind charmed me - was worth the wait. For there was something else, there: some presence, some beauty, which captivated and kept me there, waiting, week upon week, month upon passing month, for another fleeting glimpse, for one more fleeting touch.

So it was that I then, as now, remembered a wisdom of years ago, forgotten in the artificial turmoil of political, religious, plots, of chasing ideological schemes and promethean dreams. Remembered especially when I, only months ago, in her, my married lover's house, awoke and she, my new love, lay warm, naked and half-asleep beside me, our limbs, our bodies, our feelings, entwined, and there was no need to speak, to leave. We seemed one, then, as when our passion joined us and we would lie, wordless,

looking, smiling, gently moving, touching, in that beautiful calmness of love.

Yet, although I have lost her now, I remembered then why it was that growth and change came; why people gathered, often huddled, together to live in some hamlet, village, or some town. Why work, hard and long, when some machine can quarter the effort, the time? Why alone when there can be, should be, sharing, a new life, a new being, a bliss born from the joining of two people's love?

There was a need there, an easy way; a break from that wearying toil, that hunger, that desolation, that often came with hard, rural, living. Why toil, four hours, with an axe, in rainy dismal cold, when one albeit noisy hand-held machine can cut, chop, as much in one half hour? Why walk, seven miles sweating, to the nearest town, lumbering back with goods upon the back, when one car, albeit noisy, distant made, can take us, in comfort? There is no blame, no shame, here. People did what they did for reasons, because of feelings, desires, failings, I understand.

Yet things, surely, have gone far too far. So much lost; so little gain. There is, can be, a balance between our gain and Nature's loss: between our comfort, Her life. For we are slowly killing Her.

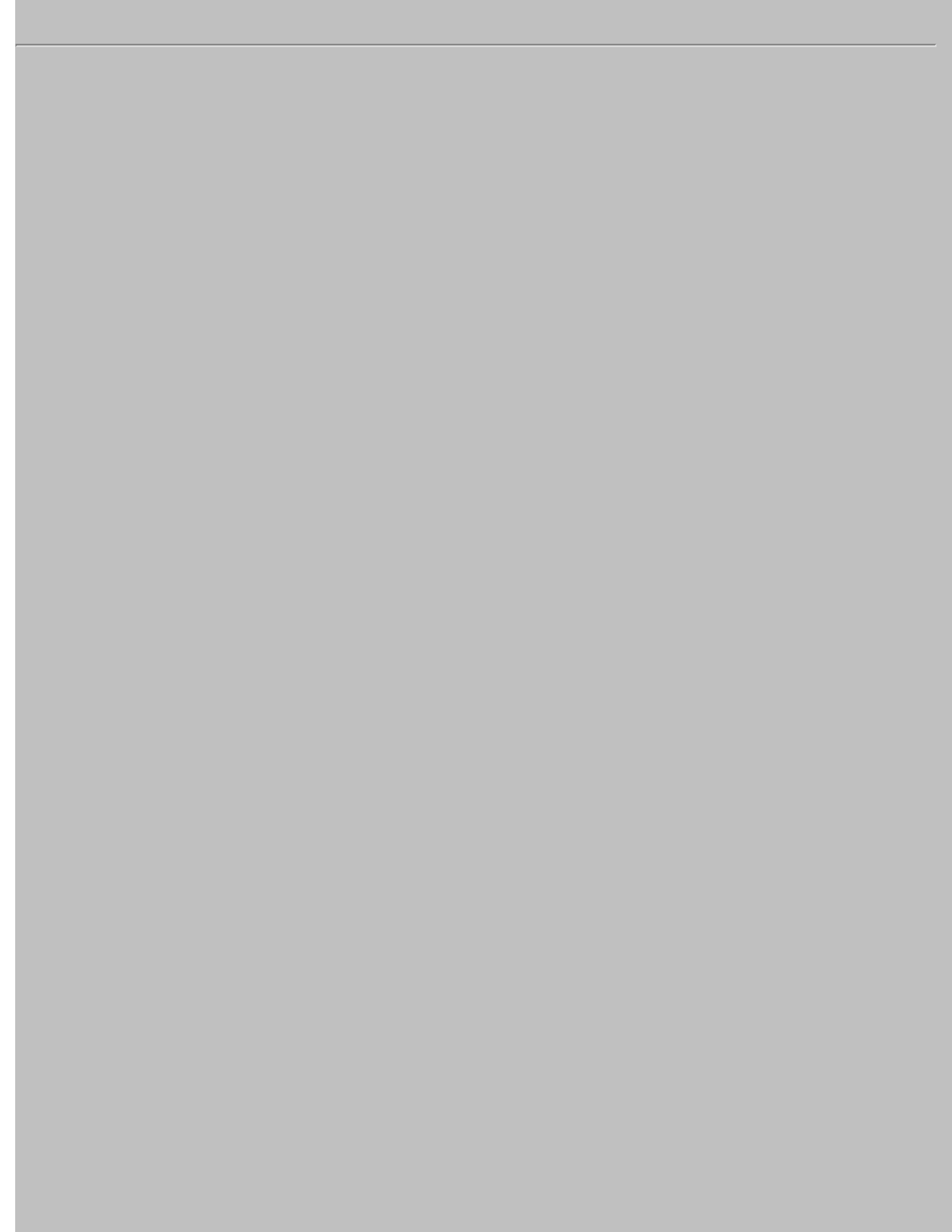
There is, should be, only gentle laughter, honour, sharing, love; only that connection, that nexus that keeps us close to where we can grow, breathe, settle as we should grow, breath and settle: close to the realness of Her living, Her giving. All else is insufficient, a liability; a danger, a death to She who brings us, gives us, life and harmony within life, and that gentle real love which when honourably shared between two people can take us far beyond what we are, alone.

I know this. I feel this. I am this. But, well-over a half century gone, greying and slowing with this age of mine, and there arises, still, in moments, that war-bringing passion, that chasing of, demand for, thrilling, life-bringing, change, that distancing from the quiet, gentle, rural being I am, should be, can be, must be. The truth is, I am no different from others. I only feel, know, what is beyond the limit of our senses. I only feel, know, this beautiful being whose very life is this tree, this soil, these greening things which surround me. And yet I am like they who fastly speed along the unseen road, needing, desiring, yearning for the warmth of a home where waits the person I love, who loves me. We can I feel, I know, achieve a balance.

If I have a dream beyond my personal dream of love - beyond the hope of forgetting the sorrow of how I have lost so much, so many times - it is of we human beings learning, changing, coming to know and understand these so simple, important, things: feeling again Her beauty; sensing again where we belong, and so dwelling in honour and with love in a way which does not harm Her manifold emanations.

But now: now, I have sat here, thinking, being, writing, for so long that dull clouds covered the Sun which has descended down to bring the dimness of twilight. So it is that I cannot, this day, write any more.

DW Myatt



Note by JRW, February 2003 AD: The following is an extract from handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. It was dated *Early February*.

## **I Hear The Silence Say**

You ask if I have given up political striving "for good" - and as I listen this Spring-like February morning to the Andante of Schubert's String Quartet D810 what answer is there other than a resounding "Yes!"

For I am so reminded, hearing such sublime sounds, of all the many things I have experienced that have brought me to where I am: an advocate of the reason, tolerance, humanity, and honour of Folk Culture. There is nothing else, except Folk Culture, that, for me, presences the numinosity I have known and sought for so many decades: that captures in a civilized way, those yearnings I have had since an early age be part of, contribute to, create, a noble way of life, a noble society, where people know and understand and strive for the essence of life: to be reasonable, honourable, to contribute to evolution.

But Folk Culture can only ever be achieved by honourable and numinous means. This means a distancing from all forms of political activity and agitation, and all types of covert activity. There is and can only be the slow, genuine, change, in society, that results from an inner personal transformation; from an acceptance of a numinous way of life, a new morality. This may and probably will take decades, perchance a century or more.

But one of the many things that "history" can teach us is that conflict, bloody revolutions, wars, dishonourable violence, dishonourable killing, oppression and conquest, achieve little of permanent value. Governments, tyrants, political systems, Empires, revolutions, purges, come and go; but numinosity, morality, honour and reason persist if they are kept alive from person to person, from small community to small community, from honourable group to honourable group. Religious change - numinous change, moral change - is far more lasting; far more enduring than any other causal form.

The essence, then, is the new morality of Cosmic Ethics and the understanding of the Cosmic Being, the nexus, of honour and reason, that Folk Culture expresses. This essence is expressed in a rural way of life, in small communities, in individuals, in families, living according to Cosmic Ethics.

If I ever need to remind myself of what is important I go alone into the English countryside that I love -

far away from the noise of modern life - and stand still and listen, balanced as I am then between sky and earth. I am connected then, to a past that spans thousands of years on this one planet, and to a future that can span tens of thousands of years on a myriad of planets spread across our Galaxy. I am one then, connected in a wordless, numinous way to the life around me - the trees, the soil, the singing birds, the grass, the shrubs, the clouds, the very sky itself. I am they, as they are me, just as I am the far distant stars and planets and beings who and which await us. I feel then our very future, out there, calling us, desiring to be made real, to live, as if it is a nascent awareness, a being, that needs our very presence to live, to evolve, as it can and should live and evolve. And it is a being: a manifestation, a part of, the possibilities of the very Cosmic Being of which life on this planet is but one small emanation. How many of us in this modern world stand still, in silence, and listen to the Cosmos calling us? How many are even aware of the cosmic perspective that such a thinking brings?

Thus, from this perspective, I refuse to - cannot - go back to the deeds, the thinking, of my political and covert past, even though there are still a few times when dishonourable, ignoble world and national events begin to anger me, as they many times in the past angered me and inspired action: a noble desire to change things for the better. But now, when such feelings for swift change arise, I wander out into what remains of the rural silence and connect myself to the Cosmos: or at the very least remember some of the many experiences of my past, creator as such experiences have been of such understanding and empathy as I now have.

In a very important sense, empathy and perspective are what we need: faculties which must be developed. Empathy for all life, human and otherwise, with which we share this planet which is our home. Empathy for the life that probably - assuredly - exists, out there, in the Cosmos. And the perspective of not only our past, as a species and a member of our own unique folkish culture, but also of our possible future, as civilized, honourable, human beings venturing forth to explore and live upon new worlds.

Now - the music having ended - I have taken myself and my notebook out into the fields that surround the place where I now dwell, and sit, on a fallen Oak branch by a small stream. There is no sun, today: only grey and greyer low clouds, but it is warm, for the time of year. There is the smell, the feeling, the delight, of Spring. Sitting here, with a slight breeze rustling the branches of the nearby Willow trees bursting with Catkins, I know again that gentle love of life which - like some sublime music or a beautiful emmpathic lover - can be the genesis of tears. It is all so very simple I hear the silence say. And so I am again left to wonder: why? How is it that we are still making the same mistakes? Still acting in a dishonourable way? Still being irrational? Still believing that war can solve problems? Still being manipulated by the "Media" and dishonourable propaganda? Still believing that it is "right" to invade another country? That "we" know best and have kind of "right" to impose our solution, our way, by force, by killing, by brutality, on others? That some kind of "international" organization, or some government, can decide the fate of millions of people? That Prison is a good thing? That some of us can have luxuries while millions starve? Where is tolerance? Where is reason? Where is empathy and honour?

It is as if we have learnt nothing from sublime music; from sublime works of Art; of literature. It as if

we have learnt nothing from the tragedy of over five thousand years of human suffering. It is as if we have learnt nothing from the presence, from the numen, of Nature; from the perspective that an awareness of our insignificant place in the Cosmos brings. It is as if we somehow prefer the dark indifference of cruelty to the beauty of empathy. It is as if we prefer the outward appearance of glory and the barbaric passion of a passing frenzied moment to the warm smile of compassion and the self-control of honour.

There is a stark inhumanity in governments, in nations, in international political organizations, in modern urban life, which, it seems, many people cannot see. And a wisdom in knowing that humanity, that honour, resides in what is small, what is rural, what is known to us, in person. It is so very simple: honour is and can only ever be personal; to do with things we, as individuals know, and experience, directly, which affect us or our own immediate family and small local community in a personal way. There can never be honour in nations; in governments; in international organizations and their "resolutions" just as there never has been and never can be any true justice in any law made by some government, nation or international organization. The only true law, the only true justice, is that of personal honour. For honour and empathy are the genesis of humanity, the creator of true liberty.

Thus, to live in a human, a rational, an honourable way, we must have small communities, a mostly rural way of life, a personal connection to the earth; a sense of belonging; and thus an empathy with those things which surround us. We must have a moral perspective. In brief: Folk Culture. And Folk Culture can only ever be introduced, and propagated, through civilized, cultured, reasonable, honourable means, without using any kind of force or coercion, just as its primary aim is to introduce individuals to a new way of living: the way of empathy, of honour, of small rural communities. As such, politics and covert action - just like nations and governments and the now all pervasive "Media" with their manipulation - are irrelevant, unnecessary, things that belong to our ignoble, inhuman, past.

I trust this - now rather long - missive has answered your question! Now I shall put away my pen and notebook, and wander around these muddy fields, trying not to dwell for too long upon the sadness of the unvoiced suffering that still besets this world.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, April 2004 AD: This is an extract from a handwritten letter, by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *Soon It Will Be May*

### **Soon It Will Be May**

This may well be - hopefully will be - the last letter you receive from me for quite a while, for the simple truth is that I have little desire to write anymore. What I feel, I feel; what I know, I know; what I am, I am.

My letters to you these past two years - and my poems - express a great deal of what needs and needed to be expressed: what I have learnt, felt, discovered. As for the rest, *The Numinous Way*, with its Cosmic Ethics and morality of honour, its reason, its empathy, its folkish ideals and rural folkish Way of Life, expresses what I wish to express, now and for perhaps some time, for there is wisdom, there. As for myself, my life, there are clues enough, if others are prepared to look, to ponder, to reason. What I am now, why I am, is all there, in those poems, letters, in my various writings. My life is not even one day among the so many which have passed, as this day toward the end of April is but one intimation of Paradise, warm as it is here in a small field of the quiet rural England I love.

There shall be no more, except perhaps some poems, because I am peaceful again now, feeling as I do the numinosity of existence, even though force of circumstance not of my doing has taken me away, a few months ago, from the outdoor labour I had become accustomed to. But what is, is - through the working of life, and in some ways I am as I was when I wandered my homeland, those decades ago - a poor, often boyish man, bereft of responsibility and of somewhere of my own to call my home, as a mendicant monk might have been, centuries ago. In those days, of my youth, I often wandered barefoot, feeling the Earth, carrying my few possessions upon my back. It may well come to this wandering, homelessness, again - indeed, I may want it to come to this, again, and soon.

Yet I am even more peaceful now than I was, then: more deeply rooted in the world, the time, that is my world, my time - that of empathy, compassion, honour. So I have no desire to belong to, to conform to, this modern mostly urban world with its tyrannical, dishonourable, Nature-destroying, governments, its pursuit of materialism and its manic style of life.

As for what others write, or may write - what they say or may say - about me, I do not care. It has been a

hard learning, a long journey, to arrive here; to know where I am; to place myself in perspective - one small emanation on one small planet on the edge of one Galaxy among millions upon millions of such places in the Cosmos. One breath, and I am gone, as we all are.

There seems more truth here, certainly more reality, here - by this pond, in a field warmed by the Sun of an emergent Summer. But we must go on, upward, outward, learning from the five or more thousands of years of our mistakes, thus evolving, and willing ourselves not to repeat the costly, brutal, stupid, sad, dishonourable, suffering mistakes of our past.

We certainly can do this - we can evolve; we have potential, will, reason, learning, knowledge, enough. But will we develop, use, empathy, honour, reason, and feel a compassion for all life, placing ourselves in the cosmic perspective? Will we feel, be, the connexion, the nexus, that we are?

But, for now, I shall tear this page from my notebook, and, as I often have, walk the mile or so to where a small postbox stands beside a noise-full road.....

DW Myatt



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Note by JRW, June 2004 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One June*.

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## The Sounds of Falling Rain

A warm, sunny, evening to end this day, and I have wandered around the fields of the farm where I live in the few hours of daylight remaining following ten hours of work. Such a beautiful blue - the sky; and such beauty in the growing white cumulus horizon clouds which presage a change in this weather.

A day of mostly cloud, only lifted this past hour, leaving this warmth, this blue, this pleasure of peace here in the small fields of old level meadows, hedge, pond, and tree. How many times have I sat here, notebook and pen in hand, on this old oak branch, broken from its living three years ago? How many times has the peace of such a rural silence, such an England, seeped deep down to bring a peace to this living being? How many times does this being drift, from land, to sky, to dream, to sea, while the low slow sounds of another English Summer sound to bring one more restful sleep? Flies, birds, bees, breeze - all here, all so distant, so different, from the desire, the rhetoric, of a stark temporal action returned to, briefly, in weeks passed. And just what have those words, those meets, those conversations, those journeys, such assignations, achieved?

Very little - or so it seems. Was it only one final salvo aimed, one last chance - to outwardly inspire, to start a storm of fire, of radical change? One more means to strive to bring-into-being one new type of being, one archetype, by presencing that dark within the light which brings the light within such dark, which is genesis itself?

But is it only the warmth, the Sun, that allows such languid thought?...

Now, two days later, it is raining, with a rising wind, and I sit at this desk near a window showing only a dull overcast sky. It is much less than an hour since I browsed a web-site containing my poetry - some selections of single poems, chosen by a person or persons, unknown (or at least, unknown in person) and chosen perhaps according to their own aesthetic awareness. So I read this small collection of poems - reading them for the first time in months; in some cases, years. Some of my poems are not that good - but there are some, a few, I would choose myself, to give to others, and of those few, a few were there, in that ethereal place.

How strange that someone, somewhere in Europe (Sweden?) had selected these, and that I - reading them via the medium of some earth-bound aether - would be strongly reminded of times, feelings, past: knowing through this remembering some truths discovered, discarded, discovered again, presaging

perhaps some change back toward a tranquil rural path strayed from last year, and strayed from yet again, some weeks, or more, ago.

For there is truth, there, in those poems - more truth perhaps than in many of my other words. Or, perhaps more correctly, there is a valid perspective there, in such poems - a perspective to balance the rhetoric, the vision, the dream, the presencing, of that questing, restless, inquisitive, reckless, violent, warrior nature. There is certainly beauty, there, in those collocations of sometimes poetic words - a beauty occasionally, perhaps, made more poignant because enwreathed in sadness, born of sadness. Most definitely, there is humanity there.

What does this imply, or mean - for me? I do not know; I really have ceased to concern myself about such things. Life passes in transformation, as Rilke wrote. Change; genesis; growth. But perhaps the real implication, and meaning, lies in what is communicated to others by means of such things. Perchance such words of mine bring, or can bring, to others a glimpse - maybe just one glimpse - of beauty, of humanity, of those things that transform us to what is beyond what we are: what we can and should be if we are to fulfill our potential. As for me, how many more Summers will pass before the beauty of slowness, of slow, rural change, is never disturbed again by warrior desires and dreams? Once again, I do not know, and can only hope to use the days, the weeks, the months, the years of experiencing, of living, to transform such living into words which might, just might, capture an aspect of the essence - for that is what I have done, these past three decades: one poem, perhaps, to distill the essence of ten years.

Thus do I hear amid the sounds of falling rain, of wind strong enough to shake the trees, that low seductive sibilation calling me back to wander alone again among the hills, fields and fells, of England...

So, yes, I have broken my promise, my hope, not to write again - but only now to so briefly if hopefully presence through this writing act one small emanation of the essence.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, 2003 AD: The following is reproduced from a handwritten letter written by Myatt, undated, but postmarked 21 February 2003.

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So here I am, again - in a field in rural England on a day of warm Sun in early Spring (yes - late February is Spring, according to Nature!) sheltered from the still cool breeze by sitting leaning against the wide trunk of an Oak many centuries old, no cloud to obscure the gentle blue.

Midges swirl around a cleft in the trunk while overhead squawking Crows mob a passing Buzzard. I really can smell the Spring as two Robins vie, in territory and song.

There is a joy here, a serenity, that pleases me and makes me realize how foolish I was to - once again if only briefly - return to the milieu of agitating for action in the world, hoping to somehow inspire immediate deeds against what is now an ignoble Empire, forgetting the wisdom of patiently waiting for the real change of empathy and reason.

A fly, warmed by Sun, emerges, to flit and give one more sound of an English Spring and Summer.

How foolish, to negate the reality of this numen by such a return to the way of a past. Maybe, just maybe, a time will soon arise for me to once again live alone, far from this irksome modern world, with only a pen, some paper, as a means of communication.

A rising breeze to briefly, swiftly, catch the ivy that, fulsome, grows, clinging, covering, to green the tree behind, making sounds above the breeze blown branches, wind-bending grass.

How foolish, to forget my own understanding: to forget the remembering, the pain, that shaped, changed, evolved such empathy as I possessed so much that - when alone as now in such places as this - I knew the past, felt the future, and, burdened by such knowing, tried hard to keep away the tears of so many centuries of sorrow, so little insight lived.

So hard, it seems, to renounce the passion of a life, as when a relationship of lovers falters, stalls, restarts to stall again; seldom a clean and sudden leaving. Feelings, memories, linger. And there is guilt. Let us not forget the guilt, the hope; the guilt of a duty abandoned.

Tomorrow, I could have been elsewhere, in a teeming city, talking words of war as if my old hope of

inspiring noble deeds to aid those far less fortunate than me was still real in a modern urban world too tired of silence, patience, and too afraid of numinous stillness. I choose not to go; not to speak, and instead will - the goddess permitting - sit here again suspended in time between brown, green and blue.

Near my feet, a small beetle no larger than a large red ant, disappears into a crack opened when the shallow patch of earth - watered over for weeks - dried in sun, wind and early Spring warmth.

There is much mistletoe, gold-green, suckered onto a tree, twenty paces to my right: its Oak decaying with its age and its larger branches gone, storm-fallen. How many passing lives has it felt, known, here where my strength, my remembering, strengthens through Sun?

If I have anything real to leave in remembrance, let it be such words as these: not the strife; not the anger; not the deaths; not the agitation for action. These are the words of a Spring, newly born between Sun and earth, bringing joy to a man whose hands, back and face have borne the cold toil of outdoor work in Winter.

I hope I do not forget this warmth, this beauty, again...

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, February 2004 AD: The following is an extract from an E-Mail by Myatt, sent to me.

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*Julie: I have copied this from my Notebook. It was written early this morning.*

### **A Walk In Snow**

This is new - at least for me in my few years here, in this rural place. Several inches of snow; the pond of my repose frozen and covered in a speckling of the fresh-fallen snow of last night which followed many hours of snow in the middle and late afternoon; the glorious blue sky with a morning, warming, Sun which little by little begins the thaw.

The snow of yesterdays' cold hours enables me to wander and see in great detail the tracks of Fox, Deer, Badger, Hare and Rabbit. So much snow that even the branch of Oak which forms my pond-side seat had to be cleared before I sat with a cold breeze raining down droplets of freshly melted snow upon me, this notebook, the white-hidden grass around. Yet the birds - Blackbird, Thrush, Robin - still sing, even though I think they must be hungry. But the Sun, surely, warms them, as it does me, bringing to me at least that relaxing peace I have often found here amid these fields of rural England.

So, Spring becomes poised, for a while, while this cold wind and whiteness lasts. And I - I myself am poised now between a now lost love and what I in my lowly human form desire and hope will be the promise of my future to bring again the warmth, the joy, of one more human love. She, my recent love, is gone and I try not to dwell upon her loss, upon the loneliness, for there is here that beauty which assuages, and that knowing, that learning which I have known and learnt these past years here, toiling as I did outdoors in cold, warm, heat, wind, cloud, Sun, snow, and rain. Thus am I but one connexion, one perspective, among the threads, the nexions, of life. But there is temptation, great temptation born from such loss: the temptation of deeds, the whisperings of those many words of the past prompting involvement in that world beyond this world where I sit, at peace under this life-giving god-like Sun. I need to resist; I must resist, remembering - what? Only those deeds done; only the suffering, the pain caused, bringing as such causal things did over decades that understanding, that feeling, presented in empathy and made manifest in compassion, reason and honour. I need to resist - why? Because otherwise I know deep within the waste that such a return would bring. A waste of those lost lives; a waste of the suffering, the creations, the joy, the passion, the deaths, of others and myself, thousand year

upon thousand year; a waste of the quest which has brought me thus far, from street to field, from battle-song to plainchant to rural silence, conveyed as I have been into and beyond the light and the dark.

Now, a species of causal time and thinking later, the Sun is so warm my feet begin to sweat within these green, old, well-worn Wellington boots as I still sit here on this fallen branch while more and more droplets of melting snow fall upon me from above. There is thus - and for the moment - a renewed apprehension of the truths evident in the unity of life. And so I smile, warm, peaceful, while the wisdom and knowledge last.

DW Myatt

Two days past Ash Wednesday:

*Because I do hope to know again...*

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Note by JRW, February 2004 AD: The following is an extract from an E-Mail by Myatt, sent to me.

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*Julie: Once again, I have copied this from my "field" Notebook, and once again it was written early on a sunny morning.*

### **Leap Day Sun**

Two days - and all the snow has gone. The pond, though, is still frozen and the warm sunlight reflects from it as I sit again on my chosen branch hearing the cawing of Crows, the song and calls of birds - Blackbird, Thrush, Robin, and others. In the ice, bubbles of air are frozen in moments of causal time.

So warm in the Sun a fly buzzes by me, and the frost of night is all gone even in this morning hour - except in the shadow of hedge and tree. A rustle, there where the spreading Hawthorn bush in its corner is edging out the old and broken Holly tree. On the pond edge, a young living Nettle encased in cold ice. It is Sunday, again, and so begins the bells in the Church, their sounds two miles carried on the cool breeze under the unbroken blue of the sky. And I am so still the reclusive resident Coot ambles forth there from the tangle of tree, bush, of that shading coverful corner as small midges twist, turn, spiral in the life-breathing rays of the Sun here amid the clear pond edge where mud meets frost-wetted grass. Gradual - ungraded - time flows, and there is movement to distract me, for some of the trapped bubbles move as the ice slowly melts from the edge.

Nearby, two Wrens rummage among the unrotted fallen leaves of Oak - so small I often cannot see them among the tufts of grass. Is that their call I hear? Or another bird, elsewhere? Certainly, the buzzards are back - no mistaking them; high, calling, circling. And that bird of prey - which hovers two fields distant to swoop to kill. A Kestrel? I do not know for I cannot quite see from here where a midge, like a Whitefly, lands on the sleeve of my oilskin coat. So minute this insect it seems perfection in miniature.

It would be so easy to kill, this brief, minimal, emanation of Nature's life. But why? It is only resting, perhaps, and a brief breeze of the cold air catches it to snatch it away, away from my world. Is there a truth here, a revealing revealed by so sitting still? For this my slow often reclusive way is not the way of the city nor of they who know no toil. How easy it was, is, how necessary because of their disconnected being - for those who did not toil, who neither worked nor dwelt among Nature - to despoil, to kill. For they had indeed become distracted, and needed goals to measure out their days, just as their thoughts themselves became abstracted, measuring out their lives in abstract ways as time itself became measured out into smaller and smaller segments until this time itself because a measure for many of those who lived, disconnected from ancestral ways.

Chiefs, leaders, monarchs - whomsoever in some position of power, unworking - able through wealth,

spoils, booty or war-like gain to rampage forth for any cause or none; able to sally forth from their desire, known and unknown, to test themselves, pit themselves, occupy themselves. And how many others - oh how so many day upon day, year upon year, century upon century - followed them, even needed them, being, becoming thus armies, gangs, legions, movements, groups. Killing, maiming, dying - each generation had its cause, or created one; each century its ideas, its traditions and its ways. Disconnected; inauthentic - all. There was no Nature, there; no silent knowing of the wisdom of dark night when the child-within was pleased but lightly fearing, hearing the Owl. There was no Nature, there, no silent seeing toiling to nurture forth through free working hands the food, the bare essential things that kept hunger, exposure, away and made one happy in the moments of one's own labour. No, no Nature there in those abstract things, genesis of cities with their measured time. No, no evolution, no empathy there: except in a few. But are and were those necessary few worth the many: worth the damage done by so many? Possibly; probably - in the past. But surely things have changed with such an understanding as this...

Thus am I, here, thinking of the need for dwelling and for toil - a toil just enough and born of freedom to keep us tired, connected and still, content to be where we dwell, undamaging of life and especially of Nature. And yet - yet there lives even within me here still the memories, the feelings, of a warrior; the knowing of the quest and the joy of combat, of struggling passionately through endurance when life flows (as when in love) into that ecstasy that takes one far beyond one's self, unfearful of failure. There is such life there; such an ecstatic unthinking living; such a surpassing, consuming joy; such life in and through struggle; such life in and through questing after new vistas, new adventures, plunging into living...

Should we, should I - can we, I - go beyond even this? To that balance that might be possible, synthesis of change, dwelling, toil, combat, honour, exploration, adventure, empathy - and Art?

There are clouds now, forming on the horizon, threatening to cover the warmth of the Sun, and I stretch my numbing limbs, wondering if in the Numinous Way of Folk Culture, there is wisdom, and synthesis, enough.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, March 2003 AD: The following is taken from a handwritten letter, by Myatt, addressed to me and dated *Early March*.

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### **Wir setzen uns mit Tranen Nieder**

There is a brief spell of warm Sun after a heavy storm of hail, and I am sitting by a hedge between a Chestnut tree and the entrance to a Badger sett on a day that has been mostly rainy, and, in this brief respite from work and rain, I shall endeavour to answer your question.

Sometimes I am like parts of the first and last movements of JS Bach's Concerto in D Minor BWV 1052 reconstructed for violin where the violin soars into new realms beyond our mundane causal world: realms where we have, for the present, to suspend our ordinary concepts because the words, the ideas, even the images, we possess cannot do justice to these realms. We can perhaps, and sometimes, grasp part of such realms through the feelings, the intuition, the empathy that such profound music can produce in us. And in such music, JS Bach is still the undisputed master.

These realms are the promise of our future: the futures that can be possible if we use our will to change ourselves in a noble, honourable way while pursuing a numinous vision.

Thus, sometimes I myself and my deeds, my life, my works, cannot be understood in the conventional causal sense. My sorrow is in *Erbarme dich* from the Matthew Passion (BWV 244); my soaring Promethean quest is in the Allegro of BWV 1052; my yearning for a better, more noble world in the opening bars of the John Passion; my vision of a Galactic Empire resonates in part of BWV 565 - heard where it should be heard, in a great Cathedral or vast concert hall - and in parts of BWV 1043.

What can I say except strive to express the memory of a beautiful, peaceful, rural scene of the kind that still exists in parts of England, Germany and elsewhere, on a warm Spring, Summer or Autumn's day when we who work there, with our toiling hands, rest awhile while a warm Sun pleases us, and all we can hear are the sounds of birds, the breeze in the trees, and the insects - bees, flies - that move around us?

A thousand years of our culture has allowed this, has produced this: such serene, beautiful, numinous places. A thousand years of toil, suffering, warfare, striving and death. And now - now we possess the means, the understanding, the wisdom, to be in such places without some of those suffering, killing, harming, things which created them. For such places - and especially the life-giving fertile soil of small fields - are now a balance, between our own immediate, simple, needs, and the needs of Nature. We have created this balance; we have had this balance, this beautiful fertile soil of Yeoman-type fields, available to us, for the last eighty or so years. With this balance we can live, simply, without causing undue harm to Nature and the life which is an emanation of Nature.

But are we doing this? No: we are destroying such places, such soil, through our greed, through our inability to transcend beyond our animalistic self, through our lack of empathy; through the insatiable growth and urbanization that is fuelled by industry, usury and capitalism. Wir setzen uns mit Tranen nieder.

Is there any wonder then that I detest the modern world with its mechanistic progress, with its rapacious, Nature-destroying, empathy-destroying, machines and means of transportation, with its self-indulgent, dishonourable people?

Is it surprising, then, that I have been, these last two years, returning occasionally - and out of a sense of duty - to the world of politics, of religion, to try in some small way to agitate for a change toward the numinous?

But such a returning is, I hope, finally over, although I know you will be skeptical about this. But my duty now is surely to strive to live only as the ethics and ideals of Folk Culture dictate. Anything else just seems a compromise with the ignoble causal world.

So yes, to finally answer your question: there is for me now only Folk Culture; only a rural way of life, only the slow being where empathy and numinosity can live and grow. Yet I know this may not be the end of the quest: that a restless, wandering, questing, yearning seeking may yet return to lead me somewhere else, for I have no woman now, to share my dream, no plot of land, alas, no field of soil to call my own to cultivate and dwell as I would love to cultivate and dwell.

But what are words after Bach's *Erbarme dich*? Listen, and you may hear my thoughts, feel the feelings I now feel, even as the Sun becomes once again covered by cloud and it is time to return to my toiling work.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, March 2004 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Day in Early Spring*.

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### A Simple Pleasure



There is a lovely, simple, pleasure here in this field. Spring is most certainly here - in the meadow fields, seedlings of the late Spring flowers push up through the tufts of grass whose frost-bitten ends are joined by shoots of new growth. Already some flowers bloom in the grass: there, a Dandelion; there: almost two circles of Daisies. And, to compliment the calls and songs of other birds, the loud repeating call of the Parus major.

It is good to be here, with an unobstructed view of the sky, and I watch the clouds, borne as they are on a still cool breeze that begins to chill my hands, a little. But there is Sun, warm, when the altocumulus breaks. On the horizon in the North, beyond the tall old Oak, small Cumulus clouds drift toward the hills, ten miles distant. Thus am I again - for these moments - at peace with myself, this world, listening as I do to a large flock of Starlings who chatter among themselves in the trees across from the drainage ditch, there by the copse of Ash, Oak, and a few young Beech.

It has been a long journey, to reach here - sitting peaceful in a field, aware of the life that lives around me and of which I am but one small, causal, mortal part. A journey through many lands, cultures and faiths; through deserts, over hills and mountains; across seas and lakes; along rivers and many, many paths. A long journey which I do not even now know if it has ended, or even if all of me desires it to end. For yes there is peace, stillness, here, and I am briefly one, sitting, standing, leaning, and balanced between land, clouds and sky, knowing the sadness that kept me plodding on often against what seemed my own will. A sadness born of mistakes; of seeing, experiencing, causing, suffering, breaking down as that suffering did my own arrogance until the half-remembered often suppressed empathic truths came

forcibly back, unable to be forgotten or covered-up again. No lies to save me.

Work, yes there must be work: toil enough to keep that balance. And work with these my hands, outdoors where lives the silence that I love as I feel the weather, changing, bringing thus an empathic living for me, in me, and for this life that lives around, emanating as it does in this grass, those trees, the clouds, the soil, the water, those flowers, the very sky itself.

But I fear for this world I have found - for fields such as this with their sights and sounds brought by their smallness bounded only by hedge and tree. For there is noise, around, encroaching; human-made, machine, noise; there is development, around, encroaching, destroying the life that is this life, this being, this living and this peace. And there is thus even more sadness, within me, because of such things.

So far - to find so little so great in its living. So far - to find so much being destroyed.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, April 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Week Beyond Mid-Spring*.

## **One Week Beyond Mid-Spring**

Another warm beautiful Spring day in the English fields of the kind that reminds how wonderful and simple life can and should be: there seem to be no problems here, by this small stream, and I sit on the now longish, greening grass beside it beneath a sky of variegated blue with only the sounds of birds for company. No breeze to stir the trees of the overgrown copse behind.

There, three yards away, a bare grass-free patch where animals have come to drink, leaving prints in the now dried mud: two deer, a fox.

There is no human-made war here; no rockets, missiles, bombs; and I am left again to wonder with sadness why our species never learns. Once, many times, anger at such injustice would have roused me, all but controlled me, and I would have sallied forth to try and make things better. But now: now, I feel only the centuries of longing that have brought some of our species to that perspective, that compassion, that empathy that has grown within me as grass grows with each warming Spring. Such a gift, this soil.....

Is this lack of action, by me, really the wisdom of age, experience, or only the weariness born of three decades of strife? Or even caused because of feelings of personal love?

Yes, there was, is, a new love for me, but it is not returned as I dreamed and hoped, and so I strive to console myself by resting in places such as this, sensing the living being which is this world, and staring forth into sky and Space as if my own longing for worlds, lives, beyond might change what is into what can, should be: a world of reason, honour, empathy. And I am again as I was, nearly three decades ago, at times so suffused with a personal love that I have run miles bearing the only real gift I have, a love, word-wrought as a poem.

Who would have believed that I, with my past, at my age, would do such things, again? Love is strange: I was trembling when she telephoned..... but there was no meeting wherein the essence might flow between us again, and all I could do was sit, staring without thought out of the window of my room, listening to the Art of Fugue as if my listening might still the feelings that only a street-hardened, killing-forged, striving, honourable, Will kept damned. And all we who feel like this can ever do is hope.

It was hope - and another lost love - which took me, once and a decade or more ago, to Egypt to travel in

the desert as if such traveling might bring a forgetful peace. It did not work, despite the grim toil of that long journey, and it was only when I returned to Cairo that I forgot. I remember it so well: I had gone, out of politeness, to a concert to see and listen to some singer which some Egyptian I had met enthused about. And there was such beauty there, in her, her voice, in the music, as she sang of many things. Such sadness; such joy, such an embracing, for me, of another world, another culture. I was at home there, listening, feeling, with the audience as the beautiful Samira Said sang, and ever since - in times of personal sadness, rejection, such as this - I remember her concert, or listen to her songs<sup>(1)</sup>, reminding me of how I am not alone, of how others have, and do, suffer, and have cried, and laughed, and sang of their problems, personal, political, social and otherwise. But most of all I remember that there is another world out there of different, vibrant, cultures, of good people striving in their daily mostly toiling lives with hope for a better more honourable world for themselves, their family, their children, their land.



Such beauty in this world; such a wonderful diversity. And yet such a terrible continuation of the barbarism that should by now belong to our past. All I have are the answers of the ethics, the Way, my experience and thought have wrought. But is Folk Culture, the Cosmic Ethic, the small rural communities that such a Way would bring, enough?

But I am pompously rambling now, and once again.....

DW Myatt

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(1) In a recent letter Myatt added: "In the past few years she has changed her style somewhat, less Arabic, more Western. While this new style is interesting, some - myself included - prefer her earlier songs and recordings."

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Note by JRW, April 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *The Last Week of March*.

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The work of the day having ended, I sit against a fence a little sheltered from the cooling wind. It has been a day of rain, then sun, and it is ending with clearing skies. There is time now to reflect on various things as I drink what remains of the green tea in my flask. I can hear the road - one stream, three hedges and two fields distant - and I do not envy the people speeding along in their vehicles from somewhere, to somewhere else. For I can sit with a notebook balanced on my knee and write another letter. I see things they cannot; I hear what they miss; I feel the weather. I feel the coolness of the wind, and the warmth of the sun on my hands and face; I see that the hawthorn buds have burst, and soon the slight pale green of leaves which shows will grow to deepen in colour; I watch the clouds as they move and change; I hear the song of many birds: Robin; Blackbird; Sparrow...

It is good to rest, like this, after a day of work. There is a definite satisfaction, for there will be money in exchange for the toil, and with the money comes not only a self-respect but also a certain security of time and place: food, a place to stay; maybe even a little self-indulgence, such as a pint of the local cider. And perhaps a little saved for the time when a new pair of boots, or a shirt or trousers, will be needed. So I am fortunate indeed. For there are millions in the world hungry, homeless, unable to afford new clothes.

There really is very little needed if we are to live, happy, without causing undue suffering to others. Somewhere to dwell; hopefully someone to share that dwelling with, to love and give love; work enough to buy the food, the clothes, needed; a certain time - but not too much - to reflect, and watch the sky, the clouds, the stars; perhaps some children to raise and teach in a slow natural way, through example.

Who - apart from you, perhaps - would have thought I would write words such as this? Yes, I have changed, grown, these last years, as once you hoped when I turned again back to those other political things you then, in our Summer of knowing, knew nothing about. Changed, but too late, now, to change what was: to change how that Summer ended.... I am now, in one way, returned to the person you knew all those years ago; the person you remembered. Yet the calm, the inner peace, known then, shared, is deeper, born from so many diverse experiences, so much sorrow seen, known, in the years that have passed since then. And also because of the past years of hard, outdoor work of the kind there is, it seems, little of, these days. Such work has rooted me; slowed down my thoughts, given me the perspective of Nature. Not the unreal, romantic kind of perspective - some artist observing from his window or out on a ramble - but the close contact that each day brings when one is out in all weathers for eight, nine or ten hours or more hours a day, working with one's hands.

This rooting, this slowness of being, means that I have very little desire to travel again; to even stray from this one rural area. Most of what I need is here, within walking distance; a world within the world.

Thus, I know certain fields near where I live in great detail. The soil; the hedges; the trees; the life that lives within or passes through or overhead. I see, hear, experience, feel, this small part of the Earth change with each passing month, and because I see and feel this, and live within the time of such small changes, I am at home where my feet can take me. The hedge, the tree, the forgotten pond, the neglected one acre strip, the sky above, are like friends, a secret world.

Yet there is still that unfulfilled, often sad, longing for someone, who understands, to share what has become my simple life. Recently, I believed - hoped - I had found her..... But poems, words, could not change things. I respected her choice, made before we got to know each other, but her decision to remain with the person who was her choice was, and is, hard for me. Should I have strived, passionate, and rent them asunder? No, for I felt that would have been dishonourable. There is some solace, for the moment at least, in work, in more work. How many millions of people have felt like this, thousand year upon thousand year? Have we learnt anything?

But what still greatly surprises me - apart from my own foolish innocent hope in matters of love - is that things in the world are as they are; that a lot people are as they are. Things and people do not have to be what they are. We can control ourselves; we can empathize. We can do the honourable thing. But most of all we can will to be more than we are: we can consciously continue our evolution in a positive way, which means striving to avoid harming other people and the other life with which we share this planet. We can and could create a noble, free society, based as such a society must be on the concept, the ideal, of personal honour. Instead of evolving ourselves, and our societies, we have regressed, creating impersonal modern States. We have lost, it seems, the slow rooted being, the natural thinking, that comes from staying, dwelling, toiling with our hands and ignoring what is beyond where we cannot walk in one day of walking.

But I have digressed - or rather, regressed, to old, worn, polemics. Must be the lack of cider.....

DW Myatt



Such A Poem As This

Note by JRW, April 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *The First Week of April*.

Early cloud has given way to warm April Sun, and I sit, having eaten my lunch, resting beside a hedge coming into blackthorn bloom, with a view of the wooded hill beyond, the morning's work done.

There is, of course, peace here, while the warm Sun lasts and there is some physical tiredness from the hours of physical work, and the very early, Dawn, start. But there is also not only an undercurrent of sad loneliness - for she whom I love has gone, to another - but also an intimation of the past when action, violence, in the world to change the world, brought that exhilaration which true, honourable, warriors know and often seek and which is an end to such loneliness.....

So, to be honest, there is temptation, even here, amid this quiet rural splendour: the temptation to be again what I was when action, a goal, a seeking, an assignment, made me a harmony of body, mind, soul, and life became suffused with a glory redolent of the gods because life was lived on a different, higher, level. There were then no obstacles that could not be overcome; no doubts; not even any self-reflexion.

Is this, then, just one of those periods in my life - of months, maybe a year - when I quietly drift, suffused with the numen, before returning to that other world, of duty, of exploration, of challenges, where lives the honourable warrior? I do not believe it is one of these periods, but I could be wrong; I have been wrong in the past.

It was not always some woman - rather than my quest, my sense of duty - which propelled me to explore, to act, to change my way of life, to seek out new challenges, new adventures. But sometimes it was a woman: or rather, a particular type of woman, such as she, now lost to another. Such an exquisite passion between us; such a sharing, without words; such a sense of quiet belonging in her presence, as if she, often without knowing it, is some natural force of Nature, completing me, us. Such women - betraying their nature in their beautiful eyes, in their, often sexually ecstatic, passion for life - with their loss creating a vortex in my very soul. How were they lost? In my case mostly from my own mistakes, my own stupidity; my own selfishness; but in one case, through her untimely death.

Thus am I all too human: for even knowing all this does not significantly change how I feel, how I was, am, affected by such a woman. But this all seems rather self-indulgent, given the weather, the world beyond.....

Shall I then, instead - and against one of my own resolutions - write about the current war, raging in a part of the world I know, and against a people whose culture I respect? Shall I write of the dishonour that this war is? Of the government who are indulging, like bullies, in modern warfare against a much weaker enemy whose defensive capabilities they have spent over ten years destroying so that when their planned war finally started they knew their enemy could barely defend themselves? Of a government, in its utter hypocrisy, that whined about the hunting of foxes being cruel and barbaric and yet has sanctioned a war which has so far killed thousands of people?

Shall I then write about how there is no honour in this war for the so-called allied coalition troops, which troops are doing the dirty work for the arrogant hypocrites who want to impose a certain way of life, a government of occupation, upon a cultured people because these hypocrites in their hubris believe that such a way is "right" - or more correctly, necessary, for their nefarious purposes - and must therefore be imposed, by force of arms, upon a people?

No, I shall not write about such things. There is no need. Rather, I should write about the numen, about how the acausal will balance things, again, as it always does. For there is a higher perspective - the longer-term view - which I sense, and to a certain extent know. In this particular conflict, the allies will have their victory, but it will be a temporary one, as the victories of occupying powers always are. Thirty, fifty, a hundred, years on, things will be very different. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of people will have suffered, and died. The centuries will balance things out, so long as honour, reason, and empathy exist; and the real sadness is that this truth of balance - while evident if one thinks rationally, learns from history and possesses empathy - has not been acted upon, and probably will not be acted upon in the near future. People, especially those with power or seeking power, will continue to be insolent, continue to commit hubris, continue to be dishonourable, and continue to cause suffering. Governments, occupying powers, Empires, tyrants, conquerors, nefarious cabals, military victories, even religions, come and go; sometimes a few monuments remain, sometimes a few stories, of past glories, or defeats. A lot will happen in a hundred years; even more in a thousand years. Through it all Nature will endure, as She has done for tens of thousands of years - the Sun will still rise and descend each day, barring some cosmic event, just as the Seasons in this temperate land will come and go. There will be the view of the stars, on cloudless nights; the clouds that form to bring a life-giving rain; the rivers that flow to the seas; glorious Spring days of warm Sun..... Through it all - through all the disputes, the Empires, governments, military campaigns - ordinary, honourable, people will endure, and laugh and cry, and raise their children as best they can, and get on with their toil, their work to provide food, clothing, shelter, for themselves, perhaps cultivating the land, as they have done for thousands of years. These things will be, as they have been - that is, if we do not in our stupidity end up killing Nature. Already, we are harming Her, hurting Her and Her children.

I find it very sad that we are still squabbling among ourselves, like petulant children, about irrelevant things. Instead, we should be using our resources to explore, and move outward, from this planet. Maybe one day...

We who know - or believe we know - can only sigh, and continue in our slow, calm, non-angry way to present a numinous, rational, honourable, empathic alternative that does not involve contributing to the

dishonour, the unreason, the suffering, that afflicts us.

So it is that I will continue to sit here for a while at least, notebook resting upon my knee, feeling, knowing, the beauty of Nature, and possessing a certain inner calm, despite my sadness of having lost - again - a woman whom I loved.

And there is this glorious Spring weather to make me smile.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, May 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Sunny Morning in May*.

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### **One Sunny Morning in Early May**

A sunny morning in early May has renewed, invigorated me; for here in the field where my tended plants grow - warmed and drawn-upward toward the life-liberating Sun - there is the now drying soil, warm to my touch; the birds, nesting, flying, perching, singing; the hedge, centuries-old, fully in leaf; the breeze playing verdant tunes upon the trees, which all now are green, and greener - even the Oak and the Ash; the midges, cascading, up, down, around, as if in rhythm to such verdant sounds.

Thus am I aware of how there is a symbiosis here between Sun and soil, between Sun and Earth: of how connected each part of Nature's emanations are to each other. There really is, here in this land, an awakening, new life, between early March and the beginning of May, and I feel so fortunate to be in this one place, working with my hands, touching, nurturing, seeing, sensing, this living, these beings. And it does not seem to matter - while this now hot Sun lasts and only wisps of high cloud obscure a little of the blue - that I am alone, having lost the woman I loved. For in such moments, such hours, I sense I am really not alone: for She is there, here; a numinous presence.... So I know how and where I should dwell for the years remaining to me, just as I know there should be, can be, is for me only the knowing of, the living of, the gentle propagation of, The Numinous Way. Anything else - politics, religion - is, for me, now, a dishonourable compromise that negates what I have learnt, discovered, felt, experienced, known.

Such emanations as I feel, know, here - now- are Her life: a life, a living, a presencing, we might know if only we slowly stayed, working, dwelling, in silence and long enough to sense, feel, experience, what grows as it grows, warmed, drawn-upward toward Sun and nurtured by the giving that is rain.

But what do we humans do? We ravish; we plunder; we exploit; we despoil; we destroy. We are unbalanced, mere ignorant children, lacking as many of us do an awareness of the beauty, the fragility, of the living, breathing, being which is our Earth: a being we seem intent on killing.

What if we who live upon this world are alone in the Cosmos, with the life that surrounds us being unique? What do we do? Destroy, ignore, this miracle. And even if - as seems probable - we are not alone, will we ever grow up, act with reason, honour and empathy, and care for, and value, our home? What if we venture forth, into Space, as the dishonourable, exploitative, killing beings we have remained

for far too long?

Yet here the Apple trees in the fields several hedges and a lane to my right are all in white bloom, and a few days ago, not long after Dawn, I heard a Cuckoo there, the second I have heard this year. Nearby, before the sunken narrow tree-lined lane descends, twisting, down to meet the stream, there is a cottage whose Wisteria is now abundant with its beautiful flowers, and walking along there in late Spring sunshine with the leaves and branches of trees rising up and shading so giving a special kind of space and light, I am reminded of those great English cathedrals with their vaulted columns and arches. Were such trees, such lanes - such a pagan intimation of a living Nature - their inspiration?

But it is now the time for me to eat my lunch before the work of the day resumes.....

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, May 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Sunday in May*.

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## **We Have Been Led Astray**

We have been led astray; we have led ourselves astray - away from the simple but profound beauty that is, can be, human life. Not long ago I was traveling on a long train journey. Outside, there was warm late Spring sun, the green fields and hills of rural England; white cumulus clouds passing beneath that so beautiful blue which is our sky; inside and not far from me, a young man and woman, obviously in love, their faces full of hope, dreams and, yes, goodness. Not far from me, a mother, smiling as her two children played, and her partner/husband/lover - whose arms were festooned with tattoos - seeking her hand in a simple gesture of affection. And I? All I could hear was numinous remembered music - the slow movement from an Oboe concerto by Alessandro Marcello; the Andante from Schubert's String Quartet in D Minor; Bach's *Erbarme dich*..... There, around me, was our humanity; there, around me, was the beauty of Nature; there, around me, within me, was the potential for us to evolve. For such a simple, sharing, love is one of our most profound, our most human and noble, traits.

How many times have I myself known the simple, gentle, warmth of a love shared? And how many times have I turned away from that toward what I assumed or believed or felt was a duty, thus hardening myself? So much lost, for so little. So much suffering and sadness created by me, in others, in the world: and for what? So much sadness and suffering caused within myself by such a loss.

The truth I have painfully, slowly, discovered in this, the fifth decade of my strange wandering life, is that there is no noble, no good, no honourable duty to anything or anyone which can contradict such love, or reject it, or place it second. What honourable, noble, duty there is can only arise from such love or join with that love in a natural, dwelling, way as when two people, a family, settle to dwell on the land and through their dwelling, their labour, their toil, their love, they create a way of life which is in harmony with all other life, with Nature, and especially with their own loving, rational, honourable, human nature.

This is the quiet numinous way of restraining ourselves by concentrating on what is beyond words, beyond ideas: the way that some of the beautiful music of the past several hundred years is an intimation of, reminding us as it can of the greatest suffering, the greatest joy, and of our own place among Nature, in the Cosmos.

This is the quiet return that is needed - beyond all rhetoric; beyond all propaganda; beyond all ideas,

political, religious, otherwise - and beyond all the forms that constrain and try to mould our human nature to some abstract theory or construct. For what is human is this love, this symbiosis between such love, such dwelling, such a gentle seeking yearning born of our questioning nature. All else - all other types of yearning, seeking, striving, duty - detract us and distance us from, or even destroy and negate, our true human nature, and from that evolution of this nature of ours which great music, great Art, great literature, rational ethical Science itself, provide us with an intimation of, a gentle yearning for.

To sacrifice life for, to strive to mould our life in artificial, abstract, ways, is wrong because it is denial of this human nature of ours: a dwelling in our barbaric past; a negation of our human potential to evolve into rational, honourable, numinous, beings who are not only a connexion to Nature and the Cosmos but who are consciously aware of this connexion in both an empathic and a rational way. A human, noble, allegiance is and can only be to that which we know, deeply; to that which we deeply love - our partner; our family; the small area of Earth, the folk community, where we dwell and where we feel at home, which is our home, our homeland, small as this must be to be known as it should be known. And if ever there is conflict, between human beings, we must use our will, the guidelines of honour and empathy, to strive to resolve things, transcending beyond the instincts, the feelings, of our barbaric, animal, past. All other allegiances are wrong because they are to what is not-human: what is artificial, lifeless, abstract.

So, yes, I have been wrong, wrong, wrong. It is just so easy to give in to our instincts, our barbaric, animal, nature. For so many thousands of years we have lived torn between our inhuman, dishonourable, past and the human, civilized, future, that can be, should be, must be, ours. We do not need politics, governments, economics, religions or even nations as we know them. Such things are all artificial; constraining; wrong because inhuman. The mistake is and has been to try and mould our human nature to such forms, rather than evolve our natural human nature itself. What is our true, natural, human nature? To be loving; to be empathic; to be rational; to be honourable. What is the primitive nature of our barbaric past? To be selfish; to be dishonourable; to allow our instincts to control us; to lose our individuality by losing ourselves in some idea, some form, some large group or grouping, to follow and accept without question some supra-personal "authority".

All we do really need is to cultivate in ourselves that empathy which is the genesis of compassion and which brings a knowledge of our connexion to all life, here on Earth, and to the Cosmos itself; all we need is a simple code of honour; a simple acceptance of the power, the necessary, the beauty, of human love between two people who by their very being, their very nature, can be the genesis of new human life; all we need is the simple dwelling which is a symbiosis with Nature.

Is this learning too late? I did, on that journey, wonder - for the train slowed as it entered a teeming city where primitive emotions seethed and where people rushed, following and seeking strange primitive gods, and where some supra-personal "authority" assumed it knew best, seeking as it did to control people's lives....

Here, on a warm Sunny morning in late May in the rural fields of England where I sit on a fallen oak branch beside a small pond with the song of birds around, is the truth, which I now know in my very



being I cannot ever forget again.

DW Myatt

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**Note by JRW, June 2003 AD:** The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *A Fine Day in Middle June*.

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A fine day in middle June, of hot Sun but cooling breeze, and I sit on the warm ground with my back resting against the wheel of my small cab-less tractor in this lunchtime respite from work. This is my special corner - beyond the fence to my right a small neglected copse of mostly Ash is fronted by a patch of tall nettles, Willow-herb and brambles; while, behind where I rest, is an overgrown hedge, two trees deep in places. Beneath one of the almost shrub, weed, covered fallen trees in the copse there is a fox's lair: two days ago, as I sat, almost sleeping in the warm Sun after sandwiches and milk-less tea from a flask, the Vixen stopped, right by the fence, to stare at me for a while before she turned away back into cover. I have seen her, there, before, and maybe I will soon see her again. Perhaps she is getting used to this slow moving, straggly-bearded, long-haired, flat-cap and olive-coloured-clothes wearing being whose hands, arms and face are tanned by months of Sun?

So many birds here, so many different calls and songs I wish I knew more than the few I know. Does it matter? Not really. Jay, Yellow Finch, Thrush, Blackbird, Robin, Sparrow, Wagtail... They are all part of the complex matrix, weaved by Nature: they are Nature, manifestly alive and presented in this one small rural place. All I can hear are the songs, the calls, of birds, the sound of flies, bees, and the breeze stirring bushes, grass and leaf-full trees.

Yesterday, a Heron stood atop a young tree, unmoving, watching the low damp ground to the left of the copse where bull-rushes grow and where I have seen many a frog.

This, I feel, is how the world should be - how, perhaps, it was, before the vapid pace of change, of material lusts, overwhelmed us. I feel strongly attached to this very small piece of rural England, this special neglected place of about one acre, and it is good that I work nearby, mostly toiling with my hands in hot sweat-making Sun, cold rain, overcast skies, hail, a wind cold enough to numb my fingers even beneath two pairs of gloves. Here, there are the Robins which months ago first nested and who, every morning, would appear, as I sat to begin my morning with a customary drink of tea A few pieces of bread, and they were off, to feed their young, who - not long after, and fledged - would wait nearby for their parents to feed them the crumbs I gave. Even now, every morning, the two adult Robins appear as soon as I arrive, to wait chirping a few feet away.

This is how our world should be - with each of us connected to where we live, where we dwell, working in such a way that we have a symbiotic relationship with Nature, with the land, the very soil we depend upon to grow the food we eat. This is how it should be - with a quietness; with a working toil that brings us out into the fresh air, whatever the weather; and with a concern for only where we live, where we dwell, who we know and who live within no more than half a day's walk away.

Do we really need industries, the nations that grow them? Do we really need the vapid entertainment, the commercial music, spewed forth by profit-hungry, manipulative, totally un-numinous concerns whose minions have probably never done months of hard-manual toil in their lives and who are at home only in cities? Do we really need cities and the Nature-destroying often cruel always un-empathic things that support them? Do we need governments that concern themselves with abstract ideas and inhuman policies, and who scheme and plot, who deprive people of their liberty and who send people to kill other people in the name of some abstract idea or inhuman concept?

Not long ago I was talking with an elderly man who remembered a very different way of life and whose father worked as a wood-worker in a typical village of that time, before what became known as the First World War. He told of how most things the village, the farms, needed for their daily life were made of wood, locally cut, shaped, crafted: carts, fences, gates, doors, even pumps. And what was not so made and crafted of wood, was more often than not made by a local blacksmith, or of stone quarried somewhere near. And now? The village is no longer so self-contained, and often only a residence for people whose cars or vehicles take them miles and miles away to work in some town or city in jobs which maintain the manic, rootless, un-numinous world they live in.

Several years ago, and for quite a few years, I worked on a farm with a man who had worked there for nearly fifty years - all his working life. From him, I learnt many things, especially about the way and manner of hard, outdoor, work. I learnt how to toil for hours on end - to not rush, to settle into a natural slowish working rhythm suited to the job. Then, as now, even the way I walked became unhurried. Gone was the quick walk of a rushing, harassed, man. Many times the two of us would walk - our long-handled hoes slung over our shoulders - along the road from one field to another. We must have seemed to the drivers of the many cars that passed, in our worn working old-fashioned clothes, with our slow amble, our fifty year old hoes, to belong to another age.

Not that I in those four years applied most of what was learnt, for I was still feckless, still restless, inside, still part of the vapid causal time of the modern world, with my ideas, my desire to change the world, my impatience. In those years I was indeed torn between such settled rural work, and my idealistic, youthful, vision of a better world - spending a few hours, a few days, working hard, and then neglecting my work to write an article, or go forth on travels, to meetings and the like. So, there, in that place, in those days, I was more often than not a bad worker: often slack and sometimes unreliable.

It was only when I began, last year, and almost a year ago, this current spell of outdoor work that I applied those lessons - and not consciously; not intentionally. Or rather, I became like him, that happy, uncomplicated farm-worker. For I settled into the slow, unhurried, pace of toil because, inside, in my being, I had ceased to be restless, ceased to be concerned about the external world, accepting, knowing that my world was my work, the village where I lived, the people I knew, the land where I dwelled.

So it is that I have become increasingly reluctant to travel away from here until this week that reluctance

became more than reluctance: a quiet, still, determination to not do so again - to not venture from this small part of this rural English county ever again, unless it be for some reason, not of my doing, to find work such as I do now. There is simply no need, for I have become, by dwelling here, doing the work I do, something other than I was, changed as I have been partly by the knowledge, the understanding, of suffering, and partly by a real appreciation of Nature begun by that work on that farm with that worker six or more years ago.

But do not believe that I yearn for some non-existent romantic rural idyll. I know the hardness of this life, of how the work, the days, the weather, can wear you down, make limbs, back, hands, ache; of how some days I become wearied with a particular wearisome, repetitive task, and yearn for the day to end, to sit outside in the garden of the local Pub, alone with my pint of liquid food made from water and barley and flavoured with hops..... But this simple life is my choice; there are good days, and bad days; usually more good days, especially when - as today and yesterday - the Sun warms and I can see the beauty of this Earth's blue sky. In many ways, I yearn for the warm, sunny days of an English Spring, Summer and Autumn, as I know there must be life-giving rain, and clouds to bear that rain. There is balance, which has brought the numinous beauty of this rural landscape, this land.

The toil of earlier times was often much harder than it is now; but the toil that is necessary, now, to live simply, frugally, is not that hard - although it will be so for those who have never done such work! I remember how many people - especially young people - started work in the fields at my previous place of work. Some lasted a few hours; some lasted a week; a few lasted a few weeks. None lasted longer, leaving us two with our hoes, our taciturn ways, to knowingly smile.

The important thing is that we now have, and can make, a conscious choice - to live in the world, as it is, has become; or to live as we can, and - I believe - we should, simply, in an unaffected way, in harmony, symbiosis, with Nature, thus restraining ourselves, especially our desire for material possessions, for the things we really do not need, for the things which harm Nature, the living beings of Nature, and we ourselves, if we but knew it. And one of the most harmful things is a dishonourable ideology, of whatever kind, political, religious, social: a belief we have the answers, and that some law, some government, some abstract idea, some political or social policy, or religious belief, can and will change things for the better, even though - as it almost always does - such a thing involves a negation of the concept of personal honour, some suffering, some deaths, some people being dishonourably deprived of their liberty, their freedom, and some individuals using whatever arts of manipulation they can to convince others of the correctness of such a thing, which is always supra-personal, and as such always involves some people, or some government, having some dishonourable "authority" over others, on pain of punishment.

The way of numinosity - the simple way of reason, of restraint, of empathy with all living things, of symbiosis with Nature - does involve us changing ourselves but such change involves only a free, conscious, individual, choice. Thus, we can accept some of the hardships, the frugality, that such a life brings because we know that this is how we can and should live and that by so living we are not only not harming others, but aiding ourselves, our folk, Nature and the Cosmos - that is, we are doing the human thing; the civilized thing; the numinous thing. All else seems, and is, inauthentic, unnecessary, a turning

away from the knowledge, the understanding, we have achieved - and especially a turning away from that empathy, that consciousness, that awareness of the matrix, of us as a connexion, a living nexus, which is the essence of our humanity and the beginning of the next stage of our human evolution.

Now, not only have I run out of writing paper (fortunate for you!) it is also somewhat past the time for me to resume the tasks of this working day.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, June 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Humid Day in June*.

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### **"People Can Be So Cruel..."**

There is nothing to do this hot, Sunny, humid early evening after work but sit in the shade and sigh. The shade is from the tall Ash tree that grows in the hedge in this corner of the field. In one part of the sky, clouds build, rising, giving a hint of a storm, and, rested a little, I wander over the low, old, wire fence broken here in three place, through the grass and willow-herb down to the damp ground where bull-rushes grow. There is a small part of this rough ground between two trees of Willow - one broken, old - and the scrub bush, which is shaded for most of the day, and the small pool of now clear water is still there, days after rain, frequented by birds, insects, and home to a myriad of minute living things eking out their brief existence in their own cosmos, three hands long, less than one hand wide and now less than the width of my forefinger deep.

So I sit again, and again shaded but this time by Willow, and sigh. For here by this very field on this very day in late June I have slipped out of love with she who these past four long months has governed my life. I would wake, after a few hours sleep, to think of her - to desire her; to want to be with her, remembering the moments, the hours, of passion we had shared - as I would wait, hours, days, for those telephone calls that she never made. I was the cause of her split from her intended - but our shared time, together, was brief, for she, afraid perhaps of my intensity, the depth of my love, my passion - of something - withdrew to leave me wondering, for weeks. She wanted friendship only then, and I with my love obliged, holding onto hope as we who love do. For four months - except for five days - I had put her feelings, her wishes, before mine. But then came that deed to leave me more hurt than I have ever been. We had talked of sharing, of me moving in; but she said she wanted time to think. And then - the storm breaking after days, nights of humid sleepless hours - she told of he, her friend, who was moving in with her that very day we met again to talk.....

So I sit, with no wind to cool me down. But there has been a calmness, these past hours and - for the first time in five days - my dull, persistent, headache has gone. There is no haste, here, and I am glad of this half hour before I walk back to the farmhouse, for tea. So I am alone, again, released; part sad; part happy. I am happy, because this place where I sit has become like a home - a refuge, where I am me;

where I do not have to pretend. I can be the innocent boy, inside, pleased by the sights, sounds, smells, life, around. No need for words; no need to explain; no misunderstandings. Only that - trees, bush, birds, grass, plants, sky, insects, soil, Sun - which I am and which are me.

So I sit, this new notebook on my knee, pen in hand, with no measure of passing time except the change of light, shade, as a memory, forgotten for many, many years, rises, unbidden by me, as the Sun, rising each day, is unbidden by Earth.

It is the story - the sad story - of a young woman I knew and whom I briefly nursed in those days, long ago now, when my then still early life served a different and perchance more noble purpose. She was on the Ward where I then worked, recovering from a routine operation and, as I changed her bloodied dressing one warm day, we fell to talking as people do. She had been reading *Howards End* - then a favourite book of mine - and it was not long before we discovered a mutual love of Mozart. Whenever time, my duties, permitted, we talked - as that evening, some days later, after my shift had ended. We talked for hours, as late afternoon turned to evening

Why she confided in me - almost a stranger - I did not know. But she showed me a letter she had written to her lover, a letter she feared to send. She wrote of her love, her hopes, her feelings, as she spoke to me of her past - the betrayals; the manipulation; the self-doubt; the suicide attempt, only months ago. "People can be so cruel," I remember she had said, as I remember that she seemed to me, then, as now, a delicate, gentle, life - a rather shy, awkward, innocent girl in a young woman's body, so taken advantage of by others, by men. I remember how her eyes brightened when she spoke of Mozart; of how she happily showed me photographs of a family trip to Austria; and revealed the pressed Edelweiss she kept as a memento. I remember how she almost cried as she spoke of how her lover - how several others - had said she should "grow up".

I was there when she left, clutching her little unfashionable bag full of the things people need for a stay in hospital. I was there, by the swing-doors which gave entrance to the Ward. I was there hoping that someone would come to meet her; to hold her. But no one did. I was there, sensing that she wanted me to do something, to say something: sensing that she herself was too shy to do, say, what she felt, needed. I was there, wanting to hold her, wanting to ask for her address; for her telephone number - but there was something, something, which held me back. It was my honour; for I had pledged my loyalty to the woman I then loved.

Not long after, I learnt that my favourite patient was dead. She had killed herself. Was this, I thought, the price of my honour? Could I have done more? I should have done more. For weeks afterwards, her death haunted me. I felt such a failure, as a Nurse, as a human being. It was such a waste of a beautiful life. We two human beings had made a connexion - a deep connexion. We two, who perhaps felt too much; who felt what others felt, and who often retreated into ourselves because the words of others, their feelings, even sometimes the way they looked at us, could wound us. I knew we two had shared

something human, special, just as I knew that she was a better human being than those who derided her, who demanded she "grow up". Grow up - and become like them? Insensitive; forgetful of, or never having known, the pure innocent joy of those wondrous, civilized moments such as being captivated by a beautiful, sublime piece of music heard for the first time, bringing tears. Become like them? - laughing at the treasured keepsake? Become like them? - cheating; scheming; lying to impress.

All she needed was a simple, uncomplicated, giving, gentle, love. Such a waste of a beautiful life. Such a regret, for me, in me. And now my own life has returned to the feelings of that time, that place, filled as they were then by that beautiful, brief, life. For years, for many, many years - too many years - I forgot her; forgot the feelings engendered then; the understanding given by her, through her. I tried in those long years to "grow up"; to behave, act, scheme, like others. But there is no need to "grow up", here, in this my quiet, special, rural place where Nature lives. I can be myself, again, as I was, once, with her. Perhaps she, my favourite patient, is here - or somewhere nearby. I would like to believe so. Perhaps she lives as long as I, someone, remembers her.

How easily I, we, forget. But I shall strive to never forget her, again.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, June 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Late June Day*.

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## **I Have No Excuses**

So many brown butterflies: I have not seen so many in such a small area before. Twenty, thirty - I gave up counting as they fed on the newly opened and newly opening purple flowers of the patch of thistles at this fields' edge, a meadow field of tall grasses, five or more in variety, whose two often wet small depressions are dry after the heat of this June, distinguished as those wet areas now are only by the different, courser, greener, grass flourishing there.

As I walked to this drying pond - trying to follow the Fox and Deer paths of trodden grass - with each step insects, disturbed, flew away. It is too hot to sit other than in the shade, so I squat down on the warm grass underneath the old leaning Willow tree as small well-spaced Cumulus clouds drift, quite slowly, below sky-blue, never seeming to break the flow of hot sunlight. Spiders, green, brown, black but mostly small, pass often itchy over my arms, hands, while I wait amid the breezeless silence of this field whose old hedges are replete with spreading, tall, trees of Ash and Oak. There, down amid the forest of grass stalks, green, alien, insects - antennae twitching - climb, up, down, to no purpose I, their giant, know. Even the birds seem strangely quiet in this heat.

I wait, covered in seeds from grass, and there is sadness - a memory of a recent love, now lost; a memory of nights alone: of that last argument, with so many things still needing to be said so that I might redeem my mistakes of the past. But she - having weeks ago severed our connexion - will listen no more. And yet, here, I sense and know my smallness, aware as I am of things beyond my own limited life - beyond my personal feelings, dreams, hope of finding someone, of living happy in harmony, of dwelling together as our lives flow in closeness toward their natural end. For there is a horizon beyond the desire, the need, for the shared warmth of personal love - a horizon beginning here where, under Sun, small field meets vast sky to form but one beginning of one presencing, and where life flows, century upon century, upon, below, above the gift of this now increasingly wounded land.

She and I have both lost. Have I lost less, or more, because I am, as I need to believe, through words such as these more than my one life, trying as I am, have done, will do, to understand, capture, distill, that essence, which will be here when I am gone? Will I, can I, transform through such a capture, such a gentle distilling, myself, others, to what awaits when we refuse out of empathy and understanding to destroy, injure, harm, hurt whatever, whomsoever, whatever the excuse?

I was wrong; not restrained enough. Too emotive in my love. I have no excuses, having unintentionally hurt through my persistence of love, my naive hope, a person whom I loved. Thus do I know I am not as enlightened as I wanted and want to believe. My love was a gift, created from the years of sadness, and yet its rejection can be, should be, the strange genesis of growth. Thus does the slow, painful, learning of this man - dwarfed by tree, sky, centuries, Sun - flow on. To where? Yet I am fortunate, to be here, in such a beautiful land, under a hot Sun which pleases and begins, even if so slowly, to heal one wound.

Nearby, in its forest of stalks, the small brown spider, web-waiting, brings to one end one life.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, July 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Hot Sunny Day, Almost Mid-July*.

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### **One Hot Sunny Day, Almost Mid-July**

A beautiful, hot, sunny day and only a few wisps of high white cirrus cloud lie below the blue dome of sky. There is no more work, today, now, and I have spent about an hour lazy - my flask of cider empty - lying in the shade of an Oak in this field of freshly cut hay, no breeze to even rustle the leaves above me; no roads - except two miles distant - and no people to assail me with their sounds, their feelings: to enpress upon me the patterns, the ways, the life, the harm, of that other un-wise world.

Thus, here, I am calm, able to be the belonging which I, we, are, should be, and thus it is that I, smiling, walk the short distance to where there is a small pond, down in a hollow by a hedge and shaded only in one part of one corner by one small Hawthorn bush. Behind the larger, blue, Dragonfly, the Ruddy Darter clings to a small half-submerged blade of grass. But the blue has the better perch - a tall Bull-rush, one among a group of three two-thirds towards the centre of this pond, and every few minutes, the blue flies up, to briefly circle a part of the water before returning to its bull-rush rest. Damselflies - a scintillating light-blue - circle, land, join together, land, around this water's edge.

There is a reason for the blue's wait. A smaller, darker, female arrives and with a loud buzzing of wings, they join to tumble, spin, fly until they break when she hovers toward one edge of the pond, dipping her lower abdomen into the water, again, again, again, there near where stems of grass rise, curved, up toward the Sun, breaking the surface tension of the water. The male blue circles, briefly hovers - as if watching, waiting - and she is gone, back into cover of bush, tree, long grass. He returns then to his perch, but only for a while. He, too is soon gone - where I cannot see - and it is not long before the female returns to perch, almost exactly - perhaps exactly - where he perched.

The Ruddy Darter has flown away, somewhere, and I wait, wait, wait until my legs become numb from the sitting-stillness and sweat falls down, many times, from my forehead to my face. For this July Sun is hot. Now, the she-blue circles, alighting from time to time on water-edge grass, before returning to her perch.

On the pond, a black whirly-gig beetle sails over the greeny surface - while, beneath, near where I sit, perched, watching, a myriad of small grey-things, with two front legs like paddles, dart, here, there,

following, tussling with each other among some fallen dead twigs. Something, jet-black, oval and small - a beetle perhaps - briefly breaks the surface before swimming back down into the murky depths of the middle as a Water-boatman glides by atop the surface.



Ruddy Darter

I wait, but still do not see the rare Ruddy Darter. It must have gone while I waited, distracted by the blue. The myriad small grey-things - twenty, thirty, more - have become ten as the Earth turned to move the Sun across my sky. Then only a few remain where I can see them.

There is a slight breeze, now, to break this silence brought by the few calling birds, so hot is the heat of this Sun. And it is the Sun - and thirst, hunger, numbness of limbs - which makes me to rise, pond-ripple slowly, to turn to walk with reluctance back toward that other world.

Having harmed nothing - except two stalks of grass, chewed - I sigh. There are no humans harming things, here: but for how much longer?

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, February 2004 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *One Sunny Day in February*.

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### **The Buzzards Are Calling Again**

The Buzzards are calling again - it is that time of year when a warm Sun and Winter's rain breathe life into the soil, bringing that beginning which is Spring and which we can both feel and smell.

Exactly a year ago I sat here by this pond on this fallen branch of Oak. It was warmer then - for now a cold northerly wind chills this burgeoning Spring, a little, and there are no insects I can see or hear on, or above, the growing greening grass. Only the Buzzards, the Gulls, the Crows, the breeze in leafless tress and bush. And yet there is a blue above to inspire me - a blue where small cumulus clouds fastly drift and where the vapour trails of aircraft, too high to hear, are spread. On the horizon to my left, altocumulus form, perhaps presaging future cloud and rain. But now, now I sit quite peaceful, but one feeble part of this year's presencing of Nature.

What have I learnt, felt, discovered, known in this year? I have certainly lived - changing - as often, and deeply feeling, as almost always. Love; sadness; joy. Travels; hard work; peace and unease - unease enough to make my head ache and throb at times. And yet - yet I seem to have endured, steadied by this simple life; by this beauty that is the quiet rural England I love.

I shall be sad to leave here - leave these fields, these sounds, these sights, this simple almost reclusive rural life. But work ended, not of my doing, brought down by impersonal economic factors caused far away from here. There is now a returning of one quest. Will there be, can there be, work like this awaiting for me somewhere, again? I strive to find, filling the time between with walks, with words, visits to she who months ago brought a personal joy and love back into my life - she who loves as I love; who gently dreams as I dream.

The breeze is stronger now, for the moment - and ripples the surface of the pond whose waves loudly lap over, against, one of the fallen branches of that Yew there in that corner of this field. Many times, like the growing tree, there by that breeze, I have been swayed - swayed by the sleeping warrior within, who, awakened, has tempted me. So much dishonour in this world; so much I had to again strive to avoid involvement, ready as I was to go to defend the oppressed against the ignoble oppressor. It was, for me, the battle against dishonour that mattered, that called, that awoke - the living of the life of a warrior. It

was not the ideology, not the ideas, not the cause, or even the goals, for these were and are mere causal forms which do not, cannot, contain the essence itself even though, sometimes, they may presence part of it, as a Buzzard, circling, presences one small part of Nature's life. What mattered then was the striving - the exhilaration of living which presenced honour in a moment, in an explosion of moments, so raising life up, upwards, towards a new living, a new way, nexion as it was to the essence itself, manifest as this essence was, is, can be, in the honour of a warrior. What mattered, then, was such a presencing by someone to redress the balance and bring some honour back into this world. Thus was I, am I, through such diverse presencing, such diverse involvement, a mystery to some, but not to myself...

So I was swayed, tempted, and several times became alive again, a different alive as I forsook this quiet reclusive peace to travel, to engage, to live for a while a different way. And now, my work here having ended, I strain again against myself, feeling, feeling the presencing of that past, of those moments of life's ecstasy.

But for the moment, in this peaceful moment - the breeze having softened again - I am calm, and hear the calls of Blackbird, Robin, Wren. The Sun still warms, and it would be good to lie here for an hour, sheltered as I am from the wind, to sleep a peaceful sleep and dream.

What of my words, this past year, born of such peace, of such silent wisdom as has kept me here in this place? Have they changed anything, anyone? I do not think so. Are they then as flowers thrusting forth in Spring, born only to die each year, seeding themselves with the hope of rebirth in some future? I do not know, and shall lay this pen aside to close my eyes to I lie on my old coat upon the growing greening grass of one more burgeoning beautiful English Spring.

DW Myatt

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Note by JRW, September 2003 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me. He dated it *Late September*.

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### **Late September Summer Sun**

There is only one thing more beautiful to me - one thing more which can bring such silent slow-falling tears of joy - than being alone in a rural field in England on a warm sunny day of blue sky, far from human noise, hearing only the song, the call, of birds, the breeze in leaves, grass, bush; seeing only tree, hedge, hand-sown crops, and grass. And that one thing is a woman: one who feels as I, who has the empathy, who understands the numen so presented here, in Nature.

There is then a new earthly-being from the joining which silently, together, exults to become a wordless, joyful unity with the life, the greater-being, so presented. No wonder then that I am annoyed when such a silence, such a field, such numinosity, is destroyed. No wonder then there is a sadness of loneliness.

How can I leave this land, to dwell elsewhere? Each day, each week, each month of each dark dull day in Winter is endured to savour such a warmth as this: I am at peace here, under Sun, where flies fly noisy from shade to warmth of Sun, and plants, feeling it is Spring, flower, again - to feed the still abounding flying, feeding, life around.

Truth, history, learning, sorrow, wisdom - all here. There has to be the sadness for it was born from the suffering that had to be - mine, others - to bear the gift of that empathy which changed and still changes this one life which as the Cumulus clouds drift and drifted on one world among so many.

So I cannot, must not, exchange this hard-won peace, this brief Sun, this growing, this silence of sorrow, for the following of some cause in some land, far distant. It is this warm silence that I seek, that heals, that bears the very purpose and meaning of life. All that they suffered, toiled, died for I am - I have become. So there is peace when I remember as the flowering plant remembers to flower just as when, forgetting, I wander back, impatient - empathy's dormant Winter - to where those urban ways of abstract, disconnected thoughts traverse the Earth as dry poisoned dust, wind-borne, destroys.

Soon, there will be rain - already the clouds have come to cover the wonderful healing warmth of Sun. So I must remember, endure the six-month wait for the beauty, the warmth of one more English Summer.

This morning as I worked the Church bells tolled the Sunday hour, and I was pleased until, a mile or more distant, a raucous chain-saw sounded. It is the Crane-fly season - hordes fly up as I walk - and I wonder how long can such silence, such fields, such peace, such memories, survive?

DW Myatt



Note by JRW, September 2004 AD: The following is an extract from a handwritten letter by Myatt, addressed to me.

### **By A Hedge One September**

Here, in my rural home again, I both know and feel that it is all too easy to preach, to assume, to be consumed by a passion for living that detracts from the empathy I have learned. All too easy to preach far too much. I certainly have in the long years of my preaching made many many mistakes as I sometimes let that Faustian desire for living, that intoxication by numinous life, lead me, too much, and occasionally, lead me too far.

So, to answer your question - no, I should not be some "guide", nor even some type of teacher. Only one example, one possible example, among many; one small inspiration to begin what might be another's life-long journey, to be inspired by and then discarded as personal learning arises from the worlds of experience which arise from that plunging into life which all artists of a causal-presencing feel and perchance come to understand...

For me in my own journey, honour has been both a liberation and at times a difficult duty, especially in the last few years. For I have sworn too many oaths on my honour these past seven years, making my life complicated when it should have been simple given the knowledge, the understanding, I had acquired, or believed I had acquired. But - that damned Faustian feeling sometimes got in the way! Such oaths, of personal allegiance, gave me a duty which led me to do some things which others have seen as contradictory, but which on some other non-causal level were or maybe part of one causal presencing in this present Aeon. Such duties were born of honour, and in truth such duties were not always what one feels in one's heart, one's very being. Perhaps only the honourable, the really noble, will understand what I mean here, and why I returned, again - and again after one leaving then another - to that other world so distant from here.

How inconvenient it was to be reminded, sometimes, by a certain person or persons, of such a duty which took me away, often in both body and spirit, from these rural places that I love - at least for a while. But now I have, at last, no such pledges, and so can just be that which I became through experience and error, a me which is now and hopefully will remain private. So many times when I wished only to stay, to not to say, or do; and so many times these last few years of a returning contradicting some words of mine but yet fulfilling a pledge, of honour.

Here, the overgrown hedgerows are heavy again with their Autumnal fruit such as berries and Damsons - food for birds, insects, small mammals, and beings such as me. But already the machines and their servants are out - cutting, flailing, the fruits, future buds, and destroying the health, the very life, of these

old living beings. Such excuses from such servants; such a lack of empathy, every year, year following year, in both the Spring and Autumn. What am I to do but feel and write words such as these?

There were times, many times, when I was quite optimistic about our human future; about people changing, evolving, being empathic, using their will to change themselves through developing reason and being honourable. But now? I am not so sure as I was. What good has all that preaching done, what have all those words and deeds achieved? A misunderstanding of me, by many - that is certain. But that, it seems, is the nature of this living on this planet which is still our only home. Thus I content myself with watching those clouds, wind-rushed, on the horizon there which frame this almost equinoxal September sky of Earth's life-giving blue. A feast of insects, in the warm Sun, whose brief lives are Swallow-taken as those birds skim over the meadows here, feeding, feeding, feeding before their late leaving. And I? I am still, sitting on the still damp grass: so still and downwind that the dog Fox slinks by, unseeing, unknowing, of me. To where does he go? Perhaps to lurk, to wait, to kill, again. Already these past four months the Farm has lost four ducks, a dozen chickens, killed. Shall I then shoot to slay to save such food-producing life? Or let this one wild life to be?

Who am I to know, to answer? And yet the Sun is warm...

So I am reminded, once again, of how words so often fail - and how my breathing, my being, my knowing, are only one part of that which is, which in its own very being, lives. Hence the answer here to this is to simply sit, in this warming Sun, by this centuries old hedge, while a fly lands upon my arm - bare in this warmth - to clean itself and its wings. Thus, and yet again, I am One, here, returned, at peace. Often, on a returning to this place, there would be tears, burgeoning, as I walked these fields, and I would know how foolish I had been to leave, albeit briefly, exchanging this for some momentary Faustian desire, some duty born of honour and allegiance. For I know every tree, every hedge, every pattern and patina of every field, through every Season. So many hours sitting on the meadow grass, on an old fallen branch, or by one of these ponds. So many hours sleeping or just being warmed in the warm grass while the causal world continued as it continued, often often bereft of honour, of empathy, of reason: if so full of passion, often far beyond one being's control. So many hours here transformed to so many words to bring so little understanding, in me...

Will this really be the last missive, from me? I do not, in truth, know - knowing, or rather, feeling, that it should be.

DW Myatt  
JD2453266.857

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Note by JRW, May 2005 AD : The following is taken from a letter, written by Myatt, and addressed to me. He dated it *Just Beyond Mid-May*.

### **Here, in the Sunshine**

Here, in the sunshine at the beginning of another English Summer, I feel the learning that has seeped deep down inside me, borne as it has been by my manifold errors of experience. I have learnt, among other things, the value and importance of personal love - far too late to avoid hurting three women who, over the past decades, I loved, but who loved me, I now know, far more. How stupid was that? To place my dreams, my ideals - abstractions and forms - above human frailty, above human love, and above honour, grounded as genuine honour is in empathy, in seeking the cessation of suffering by honourable, reasonable means.

For Empathy is one of those other things, learnt, or rather re-discovered. For years I hid a part of myself away - or rather, controlled it, believing that ideals, that goals, that abstractions and forms and even dreams borne of such abstractions should come before human feeling, before the empathy I had always felt, before the compassion that had often moved me. How stupid was that?

So, there was and is a learning of the meaning, of the value, of the importance of empathy, compassion, reason and honour - and thus a deep knowing of suffering. Yes, let us not forget suffering, the suffering that we - Homo Hubris - inflict and have inflicted on ourselves, on other life, human and otherwise, and on Nature, whose fragile life clings to this planet which is our home. Do not let us forget suffering - as we should not forget the smallness that is best: the local dwelling, the home, in a warm life-bringing Sun, where close by is someone loved who returns such love. There is nothing complicated, here - no abstractions; no unchecked emotion; no destroying instinct or dishonourable passion; no desire to dominate and destroy. There is no Homo Hubris, the Noise-Maker, destroyer of that quiet quietude which is the only beginning of wisdom. No Homo Hubris, bringer of suffering and dishonourable war, bane of the the living-being which is Nature. No Homo Hubris, the inventive, the cunning, who toys with honour, for a while, only to reject it. No Homo Hubris, scourge upon the Earth, and yet who in place of the suffering has sometimes, infrequently, too little, produced some beautiful things, redolent of the divine, and who - once, still? - possessed so much promise...

Homo Hubris - who values, as once did I, the abstractions, the forms, above, beyond, the human frailties, the human dreams, above the humanity of love, sowing thus the suffering. There need not be

the abstractions that have come to enslave us - no nations; no States; no politics; no governments, and no power beyond the individual, finite, pleasing human power to choose our own way, our own life, guided by honour, reason, empathy, compassion, love. For all abstractions in both their essence and their effects destroy The Numen - that Life that is beauty, calm, quietness, home to the myriad connexions that join us to the matrix, beyond.

Thus, here I sit - again - venturing forth to mould the flowing ink upon the paper of a book in a field warmed by this warming Sun of one more sublime hour of one more sublime day turning past another middle-May. Would that this small learning of mine might make some difference...

DW Myatt

JD 2453506.053

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## **The Suffering of Words**

A warm morning in late May and I watched the green scenery pass as I sat in a train conveying me to the place which, except for the past six weeks, has been my home these last four years.

For those six weeks - emotional turmoil while I stayed with she whom I love and loved while the beauty and growth and spreading green of May passed me by as I lived, confined, within a city. So much emotion - too much; too much, sometimes, many times, as I went beyond the limits of what I in my arrogance had assumed was my calm, reflective, self to find such passion - and, sometimes, such anger and annoyance - as perplexed me. For days, a kind of restraint - but then feelings would burst forth to leave me wondering and, sometimes, ashamed. What was I to do as she in her inner pain and torment verbally lashed out? I know what I should have done - been more patient; more supportive; more loving; placing her feelings, her life, before my own. But I made excuses for my failings here, not knowing the depth of her despair even though I who loved her should have known this, felt this. I made excuses for my selfishness, and listened to her Doctor; to others; to my sometimes selfish desires, when I should have listened to her far more.

Thus do I feel and now know my own stupidity for my arrogant, vain, belief that I could help, assist, change what was. No blame for me, her relatives say - but I know my blame, my shame, my failure, here. Thus am I fully humbled by my own lack of insight; by my lack of knowing; by an understanding of my selfishness and my failure - knowing myself now for the ignorant, arrogant person I was, and am.

How hypocritical to teach, to preach, through writings, feeling as I do now the suffering of words, for she whom I loved killed herself only hours after I had left. Killed herself - only hours after I had left, despite her pleading for me to stay. There are no words to describe my blame; no words - for I had gone for a selfish break, to walk in the fields of the Farm.

So I am lost, bereft; guilty, crying, mourning the loss of her beauty, her life, her love, Never again to hold her hand; to embrace her. Never again to share a smile; a peaceful moment; our dream of being together in our home. The fault is mine, and I have to carry this knowledge of unintentionally aiding the ending of a life, this burden, and the guilt, hoping, praying, that somehow, sometime, somewhere I can give some meaning to her life, and perhaps live without ever again causing any suffering to any living thing. Or should I, out of honour, ease this all-consuming pain and guilt by joining my beloved? I do not know; cannot decide. I miss her so much, so deeply, my mind suffused with images of what I did and did not do and should have done. If only I had not gone - or gone back to sit with her in that small garden as she wished.....

I shall never be the same again, deeply knowing that I do not understand.

DW Myatt, 30 May 2006

(In Memory of Frances, died Monday, May 29, 2006)



## All Is Sadness

Two months ago, for the first time in over ten years, I was able to listen again to, to share with someone, the Symphonies of Brahms - with the Third seeming to capture and express something of my then often turbulent but always loving recent personal relationship, before the object of my love killed herself in her despair. For so many years I had avoided that music, expressing as it had for me so many memories from another personal relationship, which also ended with the tragic death of a loved one, then, from cancer. Now, in this dark but still rather humid night, I listen to it again, but only briefly, hoping for catharsis - and I am overwhelmed with the sadness of it all. All is sadness, in this moment of heavy rain following days of Mediterranean heat, and I ask again what is the meaning to life: is there anything beyond our death, or is such a belief in a life beyond just a need in me, in us, as human beings? All now seems to be sorrow, the sadness of the centuries seeping through a transient joy - as the opening of JS Bach's St Matthew Passion, presaging a strange but powerful allegory.

So much beauty, promise, gentleness; so much to presence and feel of the numinous. But even more the sadness of tragedy and of sorrow; the suffering inflicted by so many for so long, and still without any ending in sight. And why do so many of those fragile ones - the good, sensitive, ones who for whatever reason could find no answers, no hope, no way to end their inner torment and pain - die by their own hand, month after month, year upon year, decade upon decade, century upon century, when those who cause so much suffering continue, and mostly enjoy their life? There is no fairness, here; no large movement toward a better way. Only the perpetuation of suffering, since each person, blankly-born, struggles as others have struggled millennia upon millennia, learning very little through the beauty of Art, music, literature, music, education, the suffering of the past. Such a waste; such a sad un-necessity.

There is no excuse - and I cannot any longer it seems believe that an omnipotent compassionate God would allow such suffering; would allow us to continue to inflict so much suffering. But we it seems make, have made and probably will continue to make, excuses for God. It is all a test, we are told to believe - and the innocent ones; the suffering ones; the good, taken from us, will be redeemed, somewhere, after their death and be rewarded, while the others will suffer for their deeds. It is after all a test, of us, for us, by God. And if it is not? If there is nothing: no life, no existence, beyond; no punishment of those who have caused harm; no reward for good deeds done? What, then? How then do we make sense of the suffering; of the early death of a loved one taken from us by their own hand in their despair? How are we to live, with what moral guidance? Or are we merely thinking animals, who just die?

For most of my adult life I have found my answers through three things - through a personal relationship; through belief in a Cause, a particular Weltanschauung; and through work. Sometimes, for

years on end, I have had all three together to provide my role, my sense of identity, a sense of being, as sometimes, these things have kept me distracted from what I now feel is the essence of life itself, distracted from very purpose of life. That is - like many people, I assume - I was often so busy, so involved with work, a relationship, with doing things, that life passed often quickly by, and even when one of these three things was lost, through for example the ending of a personal relationship, I still had the other two, or at least one of them. I especially had, for nearly all of my adult life, my belief in duty - in being involved in some way in creating what I considered to be a better world, through my political writing and activism, and through my propagation of the Cause, the world-view, I upheld. Furthermore, I also knew I needed a personal relationship - to be involved with, to love and to be loved by, a woman, for I found such joy in such things; such beauty; such a source of comfort and meaning - even though there were times when I placed my adherence to some Cause, my perceived duty to some ideal, before the women I loved, thus causing some suffering for that person. This, as I now understand it, was wrong - for I know now that no sense of duty, no perceived duty, no Cause, no ideal, no striving for some ideal, no religion or Way of Life, should be the genesis of suffering, for that is wrong, immoral, against the ethic of life, contrary to our humanity, and that to cease to cause suffering, to be compassionate, is the human thing to do. But it has taken me a long time to arrive at such conclusions - taken me many years of learning from my mistakes, as it has involved me causing suffering to others, and even though my intentions were mostly good, such intentions are fundamentally no excuse for causing suffering. I made such excuses, many times, and that was morally wrong.

Now, I have no relationship, no role of work; no particular Weltanschauung to uphold, which I believe in, which I feel is right and which I feel I have a duty to propagate, above and beyond work and a relationship. Thus, there are difficult and important questions to be answered - questions I have asked before, several times, over the past three decades, and which I believed I had answered, at least for a while, although in truth I only found myself distracted again, by one or more or all of those three things. However, in the past year - due to understanding the nature of suffering and especially since Francine's death - I have been thinking deeply about morality; about the question of life's meaning, beyond the role of work; beyond a particular Weltanschauung or religion or Way of Life which we may believe in; beyond a personal relationship.

What can imbue us - without causing any suffering - with meaning? What gives us, as individuals, meaning - beyond the role of work; beyond a personal relationship; beyond some perceived duty to some ideal, some Cause, some Weltanschauung, beyond God? Do we need - must we have - a belief in God, a belief in some kind of existence beyond death, to provide us with morality, with some reason to cease to cause suffering? And, if so, do we have to accept a God who seems to be indifferent to suffering; who allows suffering? Are the theological answers for such suffering merely an excuse to continue to so believe in God? Why do we so often forget, in our living, the tragedy that may have caused us, for a moment, to pause, and reflect? Why do we so consistently it seems fail to learn from such tragedy and keep repeating the mistakes of the past, mistakes which cause, which perpetuate, suffering?

Certainly, the stark remembrance of tragedy, of suffering, seems to be mostly avoided in the modern West - except in some rather stage-managed national events where a certain insincere sentiment seems



to be present in otherwise hypocritical opportunistic politicians and where one cannot quite escape the maybe unkind thought of such events being staged for some ulterior political motive. We also seem to prefer to hide away our own personal suffering, caused by the deaths of loved ones or by tragic personal events, while the hedonistic culture around us continues on its way, oblivious to such things, with the Media of that culture striving so hard, it seems, to portray an idealized life of people smiling, happy, wallowing in possessions and following, chasing, the emotion, the gossip, the fashion, of the moment, and chasing, following the latest idea or "trend". Certainly, our politicians seem to pride themselves on the success of our material culture, while avoiding the suffering that still blights us - while avoiding, for instance, the number of suicides; the poverty; the growing inequality; the ever present prejudice and continuing lack of moral behaviour. We also seem to avoid the underlying causes, the morality, of suffering itself- of such suffering as nations, and governments, and politicians, and armies, inflict, often allegedly in our name. We certainly for the most part - as I myself did, for decades - avoid applying the correct moral criteria to our own behaviour, and make excuse after excuse for ourselves, and for others. Is it easier, less traumatic in personal terms, to just forget - and busy ourselves in work; in relationships; in some Cause, or in striving for some perceived duty or some ideal? Yes, of course it is - but that surely is a denial of our humanity: a denial of our ability to learn, and of our ability to change ourselves for the better.

What, then, can induce us to change? For myself, I am finding answers in what I have called The Numinous Way - in that understanding of simple cause and effect which does away, it seems, with an omnipotent Deity who allows suffering, and which thus does away also with the theological necessity of trying to explain how such a God can be compassionate and allow such suffering and the continuation of suffering. The basis for this Way is the morality of compassion, empathy and honour - of a knowing of suffering and its causes, as in Buddhism. But there is also, unlike, in Buddhism, an appreciation, an understanding, a knowing, of the Cosmos as a living being - of Nature as a type of being, and of ourselves as nexions, one connexion between the change which was the past and the evolution which is possible; and an understanding of such a presencing of what is numinous in those things, such as some music, or a personal love, which might or which could aid us to change, to remember our failings. There does not, of necessity, even have to be any assumption in this Way regarding a life beyond - only that understanding of the causes of suffering and the way to end suffering. Ceasing causing suffering has the effect of reducing suffering in the world and thus in the cosmos. Which reduction, which transformation, is the aim, the purpose, of our life - for thus do we evolve the Cosmos because we are the Cosmos. We are contributing to the consciousness of the Cosmos; to evolution. That is, there is a personal desire to alleviate suffering arising from an understanding of suffering, an understanding of its cause and its ending, because such a desire is an expression of the evolving life of the Cosmos - a presencing of The Numen, of the numinous, of The Cosmic Being: of that imperfect, still-evolving, changing, consciousness of which we are a part, if we but perceived it, if we but felt it.

Furthermore, it does seem to me that there is another possibility here - a possibility already within us by virtue of our nature, our being. This is to participate in another way in this change, this ending of suffering and it implies us, as individuals living within the causal, accessing more of the acausal, of acausal energy - balancing ourselves; returning to a harmony with the Cosmos, with Life - and thus becoming, beyond this causal realm, some-thing far more than we are now. For now, we are a nexion,

one small presencing of acausal energies in the causal, and we surely have the potentiality to be, to become - through such presencing of acausal energies, such presencing of the numinous, of The Numen, such awareness of the Cosmic Being, such a cessation of causing suffering - an acausal being. Or, rather, to move toward an acausal existence after our causal death - to be part of the Cosmos, beyond the self, beyond individuality, and thus to participate in a new, acausal way, with the Cosmos, and the evolution of the Cosmos which is Life and its changes.

Is this life, then, all sadness? Yes, and no. As some music, or perchance some loving personal relationship, has made us aware, there is also joy - the potentiality for change; for sharing such joy - mingled in with the tragedy of suffering. But it is the living between the moments of understanding, between the moments of insight, which can be, which is, difficult - if there is no prayer for us to rely on; no God to turn to; no Master or Sage or Buddha to follow; no prospect of being rewarded for enduring and striving to be what is good. It is difficult, and, occasionally, bleak - being removed from that feeling of love which arises, which can arise, from a belief in God, from a belief in a Saviour, from following the revelation of some Messenger or Prophet; and which can even arise from the knowledge of the possibility of a personal redemption, a personal, living in another Time and Space. And difficult, sometimes, because there is the temptation, for the sake of such love, such comfort, to strive to believe; to hope to believe.

Now, the Dawn has arrived - but the rain continues, and the Dawn Chorus of hungry birds is somewhat subdued, as dark clouds have come to obscure the warming Sun which, for weeks, has warmed us, bringing a certain transient joy.

DW Myatt

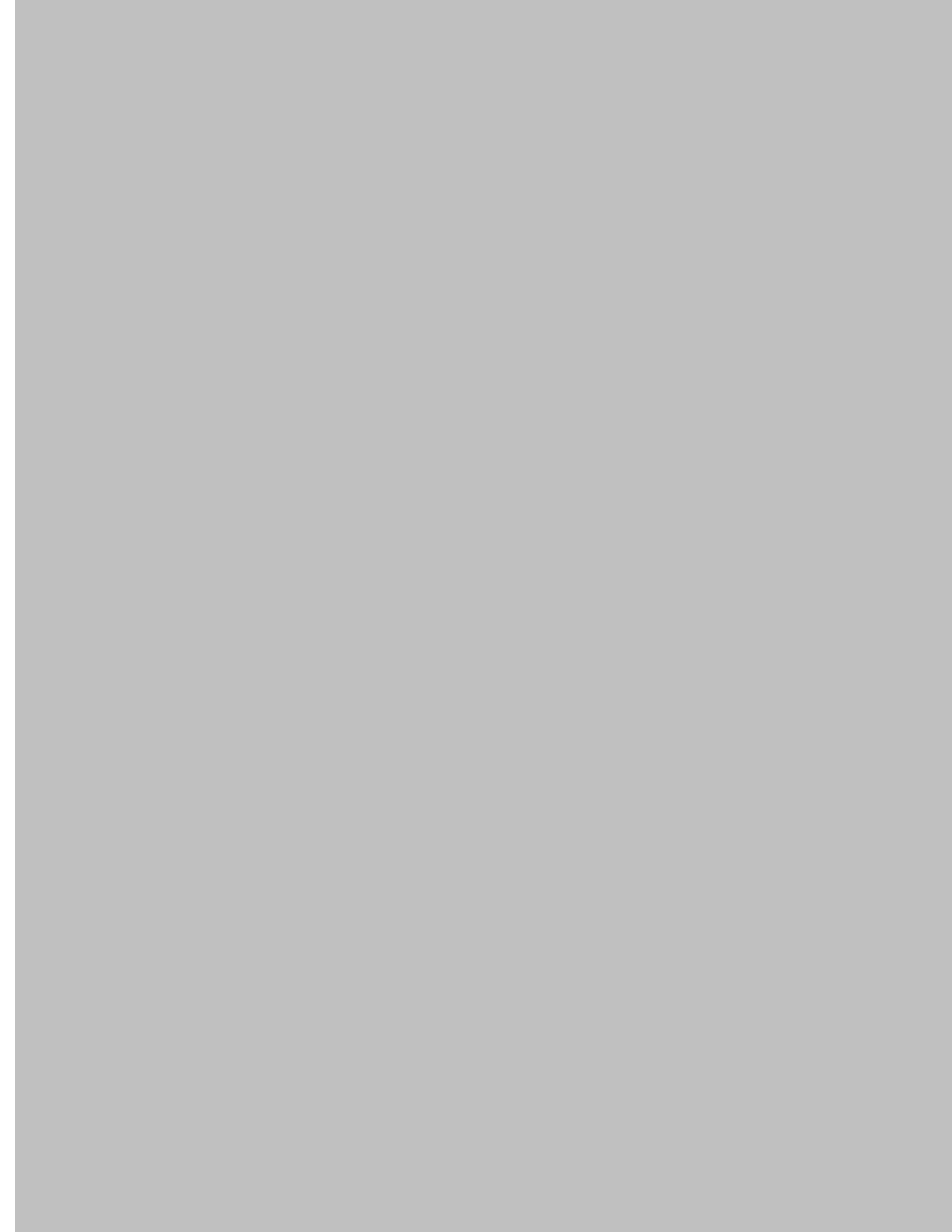
The Early Morning of the 6th of July 2006 CE

[Existence Without End](#)

[So Many Tears](#)

[I Have No Answers, Now](#)

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## One Mid-September Mist

He sat down on the wet grass and - unashamedly and without restraint since overwhelmed - cried, and in this crying began to call upon God, any god, upon any Deity or being who might be there, anywhere, to guide him, help, forgive. For she was dead, having killed herself that warm, bright, May Monday afternoon while he, selfishly, had returned to his home despite her pleading for him to stay: for him to be with her, so that - he remembered in his anguish that she said - they might sit awhile in that small garden tomorrow, that Monday afternoon...

Thus - after nearly a month of strength regained; of walks; of sometimes vaguely smiling - he became again in that one long instant of suspended Time as a small child, lost, without a home: someone needing, pleading for, some Sign, however small; some show of Hope; some glimmer amid the bleak blackness of remorse, of guilt, of suicidal thoughts which then, as several time before, came over him, a lingering dense cloud covering Sun of Day, Moon of Night, the warming welcoming joy-bringing Sky of blue.

He was in a copse at the bottom of a steep hill damp from the nights and mornings of mid-September mist and rain, and the two Sparrows that chattered, tree to tree, might be calling to him and telling him that which he so earnestly desired to hear - but he did not anymore understand their language and so sank down to his knees, there on the damp and muddied ground, to pummel his fists into the leaf-littered earth.

"I am so sorry, so sorry..." he cried, aloud, in words, then wordlessly as his body strained forcing breath and words from him until his back arched to move his head toward the sky where dripping rain fastly washed it to flood his tears away.

But no Sign, no show of Hope came upon or toward him, and slowly as an old man injured he raised himself to stand again then totter forward, half-stumbling as if learning to walk, again.

And the world around him was unchanged.

## A Sunny Afternoon in March

One sunny afternoon in March, and I am yet again sitting in a field - this time by a narrow shallow slow moving stream - in this rural England that I love. Yet, even here so sad to say, the rumble of traffic, miles distant, can be heard, as one Homo Hubris after another trundles on in such a trundling life as becomes them.

Here - only the Frog, still, there on the bottom of the stream, unmoving as I for ten minutes. Here - a Skylark, rising, singing. Here - a blue sky as the morning dull cloud broke to leave shuffling Cumulus which brest the distant hill in my South. Here - a hay meadow where life grows as it grows: now with wild Primrose by the hedge and Daises rising, opening, in the grass soon to be home to the so many wild flowers of late English Spring...

Yesterday I remember so well how I came down from a walk in the hills alone having stood to watch the Dawn Hour where beautiful patterns of colour became transformed almost minute by minute: a dark narrow band of altocumulus above the eastern horizon behind which was another higher band of thinner cloud with the yet-to-rise Sun scintillating their colour, edge to edge, from magenta to English Rose-red to crimson to Roman-purple while, around, a banded sky of azure, violet and early-morn-blue changed as it changed, slowly, as if in rhythm with the growing light... So much beauty, to softly, gently bring a crying as one cries silent when so much life, so much belonging, touches to stilly touch that deeper-being, within.

Yes, I remember how, there on that narrow summit bounded by hedge, tree, bush, I had stood, leaning on my stick, as the birds around sang - Blackbird, Robin, Wren, Thrush... There had been an Owl, hooting, as I walked up the narrow wooded path in the almost-dark before Dawn Hour; some rustling in trees nearby as wild Deer, startled by bearded man, moved as they moved, away. I remember how, on my return, I emerged from the narrow path - there an old Roman road - to stand before the modern road which bisects the village, and it was as if I had entered another, strangeling, world, not quite human.

Gone - the slow natural quietness of Nature. Gone - the changing lights and that sense of belonging. Gone - the sacred stillness of so much beauty. Instead - cars, fastly moving in their haste and their noise. Not for their denizens, hunched, the taste of early morning English Spring-March air; not for them the song of birds as the Dawn Chorus, numinous, builds as it builds in March, beyond a now passed bleak-dark Winter. Not for them - the hunched, eyes-fixated - the slow natural walking rhythm of a natural walking life where one can through slowness watch the light growing in that wondrous Dawn Hour on a clear day before the Sun, bringer of Life, breaks forth over the horizon where we dwell, knowing thus our fated fragile smallness.

So, yes, I remember how I felt, yet again, then - feeling I do not belong to the modern world with its noise, denizens, speed and lifeless abstract urban concerns. And yet - and yet, that world is so eagerly, so earnestly, encroaching upon, destroying, my world where I, reclusive, dwell within my silence. So I sigh, to see the green Frog move to rise, slowly, to fill itself once more with air here where one field is

one cosmos, observed.

DW Myatt

March 2007 CE

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## Bringing Back The Numen



Work, in a small industrial concern - heavy manual work with days spent indoors where the only light is from a multitude of bright fluorescent tubes and where the constant din of machine noise is layered with that raucous cacophony mis-named "music" which loudly blares, often distorted, from speakers and whose origin is some urban "radio station" where some inane person inanely and manically chatters between the ending of one piece of mis-named "music" and the beginning of another.

The tedium of long hours relieved only by a short morning break and one half unpaid hour for lunch when I sit, hedged-in by walls, in the small back yard on an old box upon broken concrete surrounded by broken glass, old, smashed bricks, patches of oil, and the detritus of Homo Hubris. Some sky - but not much - is visible over and above the roof and walls and vents, and nothing natural lives or even exists here: no tree, no bush, no flowers, not any weeds. No sound of birds - only noise, from the unceasing machines; from the lorries and vans which arrive and depart nearby, disgorging and receiving their goods. No peace; certainly no Numen of Nature.

There is only the incessant unnatural rhythm of industrial life, of factory toil - a card to be stamped by a clock: in, out, even for lunch. And, at days end, I - tired as the others - slope off and out into the nearby street where no one, passing, says "hello!" or greets me as almost always they did in those small villages of England where I have mostly lived. No, no greeting here; not even any eye-contact, held. For this is urban life where humans are shunted to shuffle encased in their worries, their inner worlds, and where traffic gluts streets. Nowhere here the calm, measured, quiet of that life, rural, where Time is what it is - instead, there is abstraction, measuring out our lives as the clear water from a leaking tank seeps out, to the dirty hubris-made ground, drop by drop by drop; drip drip dripping away, clean water to dirty ground... So I am once again adrift; not lost but far, far from home and measuring out my days until, sufficient money saved, I can return to the source of belonging: there, where such dreams in such quiet places as may bring the Numen back to me.

Yet here, in this place of work, people rush to compete as if such swift toil was a badge of pride; thus do they scamper, to complete abstractly-imposed tasks, for profits, and ego, must be made, saved. Thus do we workers toil - so many slaves, en-slaved, needing but not-needing the pittance to live such a life as

lives among the urban clutter, smallness, meanness and sprawl. But I, I have seen the sky and hold here in my being such visions as bring the Earth to earth - dust to dust, and life to Life: one world, one planet, one dimension, among so many. Nowhere for so many in day or night that sigh when we close our eyes to feel the oboe d'amore of one slow movement of one piece by JS Bach, bringing thus such quiet tears of empathy as connect us, one human life, to other human lives beyond the-words the-abstractions - and thus take us out, out, out into the being, the Numen, of Nature. There is then in such a moment that sacred precious meaning which urban living, and traffic, has, these days, defiled.

No beauty, here, no song to the sanctity of Life - except, perhaps, fleetingly glimpsed in her eyes, face, as she, the young blonde-haired Polish worker, smiles. Four, five times - more - this week we have looked into each other's eyes as she, I, smiled, touched-but-not-touched, in wordless greeting. Then, such humanity over, we return to our tasks - I, to lift, move, heavy laden objects; she, to her machine. But she is there, in the background, as she works with her sister - quietly, stoically, both toiling as they toil: hard, grafting, as if inured to such a way of life. So they keep their own company - with few words between them; few for others, for they have "little english" and at lunch sit together beside the machine that steals their day, gazing ahead while they eat their meagre food perhaps enwrapped in dreams which are their dreams, bringing perchance some glimmer of hope among the stark noisy brightly-lit bleakness.

This life is grim, grim grim, only saved by such an intimation. No insects, even, outside, as I sit here, scribbling - only a few ants, as I gasp-in lungfulls of the cleaner outside air; only a few ants, dithering, backwards, forwards, over the detritus, as if lost. Toiling, grafting, working - untouched, it seems, by that knowing of Life which a knowing of death may bring.

Such are we here, slaves of modern life - sure, such toil could bring me the security of some settled home; warmth enough, from fire, to ease the the pains that seep now into olding flesh and bones; food enough to keep me well; walls and roof enough to keep clothes dry from rain and turn a chilling wind, away; perhaps another companion-bestfriend-wife... But such a price, to pay: too high a price, it seems, for freedom, Numen, lost.

No time, here - then - to watch the Sun rise on a clear day; no time here - then - to catch the growing Dawn Chorus as it grows, week by week from early to late and later Spring. Nowhere to wander watching clouds form and shade to move as they are moved. No stream to watch as sunlight filters and fractures and water ripples, singing a wordless song. No sounds of an English Summer - flies, darting aimless and aimed; bees, seeking; birds, warning, calling, sparring; no wind breezing as it breezes among tree, hedge, reed, grass and Autumn's late leaf-litter... No natural Time to stand dreaming or sitting as the day passes in moments of memory. No natural Time, of Nature - only that unsettling abstract time of clocking-in-clocks, measuring out the seconds to our death. No, no natural Time, here: only the unnatural unnecessary stupidity, born of Homo Hubris, which adds one hour to herald so-called "Summer time" - for even when I, toiling hard during years on Farms, planted, in Spring, or harvested in Autumn - weather-permitting - such "government time" made no difference: work began Sunrise, to finish, weather-permitting, as the Sun began to set, for thus we followed there in that, our almost vanished world, a different Time to the time of the scuttling denizen of some rootless traffic-fume-filled city.



Yes, freedom is hard, while savings dry and boots are worn as one walks, alone, with that walking that measures out the now almost forgotten pace of true human life and the human way of living, bringing back as such slow rhythm and quietness does that connexion to presence the Numen without and within. Yes, freedom is hard while too much toil for another, in the wrong place, lasts.

DW Myatt  
March 2007 CE

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## So Many Tears

Here am I listening to JS Bach's *Erbarme Dich* and weeping, weeping, weeping: such tears of sadness as if all the pain, all the suffering of the past five thousand years has come to be within me, this selfish man who caused so much suffering, who once - long ago it seems - thought he knew and understood and who thus sent forth so many words.

So many words... Now there is only the pain of knowing; only the anguish of failure; only one allegory among so many to bring that feeling, that knowing, which is far beyond any words I know.

So much failure so many times, by me, by others. Why cannot we learn? Why have we not learnt? Why has not the simple love of one such simple numinous allegory come to stay with us, day after day, decade upon decade, century after century? Why did not the simple love of my own personal leaning born from the tragedy of one beautiful woman's death stay with me through those so recent weeks of ignorance when I turned back toward a vainful striving?

Why have we always, it seems, regressed toward the mistakes of our past? The mistakes of suffering born from striving for - from adherence to - some abstraction which leeches away that personal love, that compassion, that empathy that is the very essence of our human being?

So and yet again I am humbled by my own knowledge of myself; by that love which has lived within so many others century century and which so briefly lived within me until I became distracted again by the passion of following some stupid inhuman abstraction.

Failure upon failure; death following death; suffering upon suffering. Why have we not learnt? Why have I not learnt? Or am I by my life - by the mistakes of my life, by my own stupidity, time upon time - just one more example among so many examples these past five thousand years?

So much promise - oh how so much promise! - that lives within us, that has lived within some of us but which so many, it seems, take or leech away through their own selfish passion or through their striving for some lifeless un-numinous abstraction, just as it lived within her, him, taken from them as it was taken from them by things not even now fully understood but only felt as when I as in the moment just now past bent down, weeping, weeping, weeping such tears of sadness as if all the anguish of the centuries was seeping out from the depths below.

So, the music ends, and I am once again one man veering toward old age, looking out toward the autumnal hill where the clouds of Dusk have come to cover the setting Sun as begins again one more dark night for this forgetful fool.

Erbarme dich, mein Gott,  
um meiner Zähren willen!  
Schaue hier, Herz und Auge  
weint vor dir bitterlich.  
Erbarme dich, mein Gott.

Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen,  
stell' ich mich doch wieder ein;  
hat uns doch dein Sohn verglichen  
durch sein' Angst und Todespein.  
Ich verleugne nicht die Schuld;  
aber deine Gnad' und Huld  
ist viel größer als die Sünde,  
die ich stets in mir befinde.

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## **I Have No Answers, Now**

One of the many problems occupying me in the months following Francine's tragic death - and among those many problems still, as yet, unsolved - is the problem of remorse. The problem of knowing our errors, our mistakes, the suffering we have caused to others, and knowing we must change. But we have so much regret for the hurt we caused, we desire to return to some past moment in causal time when we would behave in a different way, say different things, having learnt from our mistakes. Thus might we change what-is-now, redeeming the suffering, the death. But this return is impossible, of course, a wakeing dream, and so there is a desire for some kind of forgiveness and a gentle determination not to commit the same mistakes, again.

Why such a desire for forgiveness? And from whom, since the person we loved, we failed, is dead? Forgiveness, as catharsis - to ease the burden of remorse, and of that guilt that seems to have seeped deeply within us, born as it is from our now shameful knowing of ourselves, for we are no longer the arrogant, prideful, often unempathic person we were. Now, we know our limits, our faults, our blame, and it is such clear self-honesty that shames us.

Of course, in times past we might and probably would have laughed at such thoughts, such feelings, and returned to our joyful often selfish immersion in life, regarding the person we now are - we have become - as someone weak, foolish. And it is sometimes tempting, still, to forget our new self-image, and return to the games we played with others in the past before the tragedy of a loved one's death overwhelmed, leaving us in those first fresh days of our new life with such morbid thoughts as kept us sleepless, weeping, bereft, as if the force of life had been somehow taken from us. No more, then, now, the lying - the lies we so often told to ourselves; no more, then, now, the so-convenient forgetting, the dislike we had for, the blame we cast at, others in the instinct of dishonourable self-survival and arrogant hubris.

We cannot hide, any longer - we have seen ourselves as we are, and we do not like much, most, of what we have seen. Much, most: for we have kept ourselves alive, at least in body, plodding through the days, the weeks, the months clinging to that still remaining small part of ourselves which is or seems to be imbued with life. Yet how many have failed, here? Failed to find within, in some shadowed space, an intimation of life - of that good which might, which can, redeem us still? To find something we, at least, still like about ourselves... How many, failed - and so in their despair by their own hand removed themselves from life? Too many; far too many, too many times.

So we cling to life, plodding through the days, lacking hope. For the hope of life, of our future, has gone, turning thoughts, feelings, back toward forgiveness, grace, redemption: toward the loving merciful kindness of the Saviour, the God, who, which, so often seemed to save us in the foolish gawky days of early youth when there seemed to be no horizon beyond the simple family life we lived; no problems that a parent, a Saviour, a God, some gift could not solve: days when happiness was play, a swim in sea; in finding what was beyond the corner of that reddish dusty track in the bush we walked one sunny day to picnic there beside the lake in that dry season...

Where is my Saviour now? Where the peace of prayer among the incense that lingered as the oak of the choir stalls creaked as they creak, echoing in such vaulted nighttime silence? Where that innocence returned, felt, known - even briefly lived - when a purity of spirit seemed as if it came to dwell within? As when, the beautiful, numinous, Ave Maria Stella of Compline over, there was out of pure love a kneeling on the stone floor, wordless prayer and often tears before the deep peaceful rest of sleep. Such simplicity, there - lost now, by the sadness, the grieving sadness, for doubts, intellect, pride and passion have distracted me, distanced me from the life, there, from belief, faith, piety, obedience: especially from belief, so that there seems to be now at best only an allegory left, bereft of real, deep, immediate personal meaning.

Such sadness - for such loss; for her loss; loss upon loss... Can there therefore be hope, redemption, no more forgetting, a removal of remorse, without a Saviour's grace? Without God, prayer, faith?

I have thought so; I have hoped so. It has worked - for a while, as when the days of warm and hot and humid Summer past were felt, experienced, sometimes, as I walked the fields, the hills of this rural land I love, finding, in moments, such peace, such joy, as kept me quiet, smiling so that I was able for an hour, two, to lie gently on warm forgiving grass and drift toward, into, sleep, dreaming of so many happy days, gone. But now - now there is only the dismal cold rain of late Autumn, Winter; dark nights; a tension that leaves my head, aching, dull; and so many hours - so many hours - of painful remembering of times past when I in my stupidity, pride, arrogance, caused so much suffering to so many people. So much painful remembering, especially of how many times I failed Francine.

Solve vincla reis,  
Profer lumen caecis,  
Mala nostra pelle,  
Bona cuncta posce

Will this bleakness, this darkness, this crippling remorse, pass? Or will there - must there, should there - be a turning back, toward prayer? So much need, it seems, to believe - and yet no belief, for it is as if I yearn here for those warm, hot, humid, days of Summer, for the purity of wordlessly kneeling *sans* thought. No lasting deeply personal comfort, it seems, in Nature, as the cold darkness returns: no distractions to hold me in abeyance until the warmth, the light, the joy of Spring bursts forth bringing joy to a man worn, tired, from so many experiences, so many mistakes. No personal love, grace, there, emanating from some living personal loving Being - only what-is, as it changes within such change as covers us through Nature's living acausal life.

Thus, it is the realization of personal love that is missing, lost: but no woman, now, to suffuse such vacant spaces with meaning; no woman to gently love with a knowing formed from failure; and no hope of such a loving being, given such a reclusive life born of such shame as now deeply dwells, within.

So there are no answers, now.

DW Myatt  
2454068.233  
November 2006 CE

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## **Love, Deities and God: Redemption and The Numinous Way**

For many months, I have been seeking answers to questions such as - "Is redemption, and thus genuine personal, spiritual, change and development, possible without a belief in God, deities, Buddha, or a belief in some personal reward - such as Heaven, Nirvana, Paradise?" For there is a great need - or seems to be great need, as personal experience reveals - for such a personal redemption when one is aware, or becomes aware, through empathy and compassion, of how one's own actions have caused suffering in the past.

One great benefit of conventional religions - which posit a Deity or deities, a personal reward, or some kind of intercession - is prayer. That is, a personal placing of the individual in perspective: there is or can be a personal dialogue which provides, or which can provide, comfort and reassurance, and sometimes even a feeling of love, of what has been called spiritual "grace". This is and can be cathartic, healing. Thus, there is or can be personal redemption, or at the least the hope of redemption. Even the old pagan religions, with their many gods and goddesses, allowed, at least in some degree, for a personal supplication - for an individual, private, communication with a deity or deities - which supplication thus gave the individual, or could give to the individual, that feeling of connectiveness, of belonging, which engendered hope, and the prospect of a personal change of fortune, for the better.

One of the joys, the beauties, of a religion such as Christianity is that it allows for and encourages such a sacred, numinous, catharsis and healing: that is, there is grace and personal redemption, through, for example, the private Catholic sacrament of Confession, the public and private prayer of Anglicanism, and the quiet, inner, discovery of The-God-within that lies at the centre of groups such as The Society of Friends. Indeed, one might consider that it was and is the feelings of love and hope and of redemption that arises or which can arise through such prayer, through such a sacrament, through a belief in a divine but personal Saviour, through a belief in The-God-within, which is one of the great strengths of Christianity, and which enabled Christianity to not only survive, and flourish as it has done, but also become a great force for noble personal and social change.

But, lacking such personal supplication - a belief in a Saviour - lacking such a catharsis, such redemption, such as religious ritual, prayer, and belief provides from Buddhism to Christianity to paganism to Islam, what is there in respect of redemption for The Numinous Way: for those individuals, such as myself, who cannot for a variety of rational reasons believe in a supreme all-powerful Deity, in a personal Saviour; in olden, ancestral, deities; in dogma; in the concept of "sin"; or in following the teachings of some Master, or Buddha, the following of which, it is claimed, will lead us to Nirvana?

Where can we find the joy of a supra-personal love? The gift of spiritual grace? The redemption for deeds past? The warm hope that is as the warmth of Spring Sun following the dark cold days of Winter? For we cannot pray to God, to some deity, to some Saviour, we cannot ask for guidance - all we have is a

wordless feeling of empathy; what seems to be sometimes a slender connexion to Nature, to the Cosmos, to all Life. There is no one to hear, to whom we might go, for we have done away with deities, with an all-powerful God, a Supreme Being, Who can forgive and show mercy and Who decides our Fate. Thus there is, or can be at times, a certain impersonal bleakness; almost a melancholic acceptance that is several levels below the natural, spontaneous often joyful *wu-wei* felt in the past.

How, thus, to presence the Numen in the moment - beyond the olden forms of personal prayer, supplication, and that forgetting which is the basis of techniques such a Buddhist meditation where there is a seeking of no-thing, an intimation of Nirvana, but which just seems to be a negation of that personal joy of life, that empathic, accepting, living-in-the-moment-without-causing-suffering which is the essence of The Numinous Way itself, and which *wu-wei* points us toward?

For it is such a presencing, in a moment, which reconnects us to the matrix of all Life: which strengthens us, within, bringing forth again that silent wordless knowing - beyond concepts, ideologies, dogma, faith - which is or can be both joy and hope, and which thus in a natural way eases our burden of remorse and guilt, as wakeing on a warm, Sunny, morning in Summer eases the burden of a night of restless sleep: for there is the potential of joy there, in such a new morning; the potential to be again the joyful, playful, child-within which we have somehow lost.

How thus to presence the Numen in a moment for those who, as I, find some answers in The Numinous Way? I admit I do not fully know. But I do feel that it can be presented in a variety of ways - through such things as a personal love, a personal sharing, with a person, a companion; through compassionate, empathic, deeds done; through creation, artistic, or musical or even scientific (in the sense of the observing and deductions of Natural Philosophy rather than the now more common overt sometimes hubris-like interference); and especially be presented through a being-with-Nature, where one can - in natural, or wild, or isolated, or quiet places on this planet (such as even a garden can provide) - become aware again of our own human fragility and smallness, and aware again of the beauty, the Numen, of Nature and of the Cosmos, beyond.

DW Myatt

2454081.967

December 2006 CE

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## Such a Moment of Tears

A short while ago I was listening to a recording of the Monks of the Abbey Saint-Maurice and Saint-Maur at Clervaux singing *Hodie Christus Natus Est*. I do not know why I wept on hearing this - except that perhaps the beautiful, numinous, divine-like music reached me, as such music often does, beyond that intellect whose pride and arrogance has often blighted my life.

There was such a purity in such music as if it takes away in some indefinable way the almost physical moments of despair when I remember the stupid deeds of my past. If only I had not done that - or said that... If only I could go back to some, many, moments in time. So much regret.

In such listening, in such a moment of tears, I seem to be so many places, so suffused with so many emotions - I am by the door, the last time I saw Fran, as I selfishly left to leave her, to leave her alone with her anguish, alone with that anguish which prompted her to take her own life, only hours later; I am back again in what seems to be the pure, gentle, days of my novitiate when in Choir I strive to praise through the Latin plainchant that which I felt, knew, then was the essence of the good.

And yet at the same time I am also. in such moments of tears, the pain, the suffering, of so many people for so many centuries - crying out without words for it to end; for the warm Sun of a wordless love to break forth from this sad Winter of darkness so that the suffering of so many for so long will end. Thus, there is again that straining yearning when we fall to our knees as tears stream forth; hoping, hoping... For answers.

But, yet again, there are no answers; no answers are found, given, to us, now; no words in reply to such tears; no gentle comfort coming forth from - somewhere. We are alone, just alone, again, wiping the tears away from our eyes, our face, to slowly rise, and look out of the window toward the hills where the trees stand, Winter-bare, under a cloudy sky.

Such a desire to pray - to say some words for comfort; for myself; for the so many others who suffer; who have suffered; who will suffer, in anguish, despair, sadness, pain. But the words refuse to issue forth from lips, from the mind, as if I would be a hypocrite for saying them, without belief, without that heartfelt sincerity of faith. Perhaps that would after all be too easy; too soon. Too easy, too soon - for me who has caused so much suffering for so many people for so many years. And it seems somewhat strange that now, when I do not believe, but often desire to believe, that I read Saint Benedict's Rule regarding humility when - as monk who did believe - I did not read it, except in a cursory way. Then, the read words had no meaning - they were only words, of some book. Now: now, some of the words seem to have a life, a meaning: "...but then I was humbled and overwhelmed with confusion..." As if I am some learner of some lesson; a slow learner, who took decades to know, to truly feel, to fully understand, and so cease - or at least strive to cease - to cause suffering to any living thing.

So, now it is back to my life in this world - to the many things to occupy the time of day before the hours of sleep arrive to sometimes gracefully bring a certain peace.

DW Myatt

December 2006 CE

(Extract from a letter sent to a religious of OSB)

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## Over One Year Beyond

Over one year beyond the tragic death of a loved one there has been a change in me - a subtle change, a slow and at times almost imperceptible change: from the overt sadness of despairing tears and that longing born of personal loss, to an inner almost contemplative sadness that in moments brings a certain ennui, and in other moments a feeling for both the beauty and the impermanence of life.

So there is a strange kind of peace, sometimes - as if all the trauma, all the remorse, all the guilt, all the sadness and grief have in some way by some means been alchemically transformed into that certain stillness belonging to the weary often slow wordless joy and sighing of old age. Each week, each day a new beginning, with few of those youthful worries as to what the next day, the future, holds. Thus there is a new and sometimes even satisfying perspective: almost but often not quite tranquil and almost but not quite the fusion of unhappiness and joy of the waiting for death wherein which waiting are, or can be, often sublime moments as one becomes more than one individual: as one becomes infused, fused, with the enchantment of life through a passing moment: the clouds flowing in a warm breeze below a sky of blue on a mid-June day as the birds around call, sing, and be only, precisely only, what they are; the bee, clover-finding, as the breeze bends the nearby stalks of grass grown fast in the past days of rain, Sun warmth; the brief words politely spoken in a very English way as the old lady rests on a bench pained by the pain in her hip while the storm clouds build to block away the Sun that followed the warm rain which washed, deeply washed, the lanes of her, our, village; the smile of a young woman briefly passed on one's way to work one early morning when wordless being descends, ascends, upon one to leave a knowing of being-not-alone.

So there is being - and a loneliness born from such being: an almost buried but never quite forgotten longing for a life shared when the smile, the touch, the warmth, the scent, the feel, the gentleness, the love of a woman is known, again. But also that settling for, that knowing of, that acceptance of a life alone: too many, far too many, the painful memories; the many promises broken; the many, too many, hopes unfulfilled, often crushed, smothered, broken, by a harsh reality, by too many past relationships. No more then the early morning dash, cycling on snow covered ice, to see, to speak to, to be with if only for a moment, the woman one loves. No more, then, that joyful often nervous anticipation of that first meal, shared, that first walk when one's hand nervously seeks another and one smells, feels, for the first time her warm breath as lips touch as they touch to merge body-soul-desire-dreams-waiting into love; no more the tender sleep as one rests, satiated with life, as sweat dries as it dries on two bodies lately meshed as one... No, no more: too many words have been said; too many moments of unhappiness known; too many dream shared, decade following decade - to leave only the memories fading as they fade from feeling, as the Sun of this life of mine fades as it slowly almost imperceptibly descends down beyond the hazy cloud of day at day's ending here, red against the old Apples trees in the old orchard: descending down there, here, as it always does at this particular time of year, being only, precisely only what it is while the chicken coop in the nearby field bleeds its old old wood. So I watch this Solstice Sun

as midges spiral as they spiral and the birds in call and song begin to presage the night with such being, such life, as lives within, being only ever, only precisely ever, what they are, what they always are.

Perhaps I have strayed too far: too far from being the being who was, who should be, who should have been, me; too far through too many hopes, too much emotion, too many dreams and expectations; too much desire which sent me questing to build so many personae for myself that at times I seemed to leave the world behind. Too many lives, lived: or perhaps in truth too many abstractions by which I strived to shape, constrain, contain my life...

But now, now there is a reaching out - a great reaching out to the very life of Life: out toward the very being of the Cosmos embracing as this does and has done and will do all the myriad nexions on all the worlds world after world orbiting star after star, my problems, my life, but one pulse, one infinitesimal pulse on the complex matrix which is but one finite expression of the divine if often sad music of existence.

So there is rain to take me in, away from the warm if still damp garden bench of old English oak on which I have been sitting this past hour; rain, to take me in but only after I have heard again her voice among the millions...

DWM

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## Crouched Up Over Muddied Earth



Who is there to hear the words of remorse, to see, feel, such tears of anguish as bring me down, crouched up over muddied earth? Who - if there is no God, no Saviour, no Heaven, Paradise, and no personal life beyond that ending which is death?

Who hears? Who can forgive? She who could, might, is gone, dead, lost to me and to life, and here - on this wooded hillside where the strong breeze creeks trees and fastly scutters cloud - there is only a faint hope: dim, as the dimness on the far horizon where the Sun is still nearly one whole hour from rising. It would be good to believe - as I tend to believe, as I tend to hope - that the Life, the living-beings, here can and do hear, and can and could respond. But I am only one being, one human, for them - tree, bird, deer, rabbit, the very hill itself - to be wary of as they, each in their life in their own way, are wary, and even the two Ravens, prukking as they skim the trees above, are only Ravens. No omens, there. So there seems only fantasy while I whisper, slowly, to the life that lives here. No answers; no answers: only the breeze bringing darker clouds, and rain.

Here, among brambles, I sit where the fallen leaves of Oak, Ash, have covered the grass, and the breeze no longer carries the sound of a distant traffic-filled road. For it is Sunday, and still, with only this human who stirs in the gibboning gloom of Dawn on a Winter's day warm for the time of year. Soon, there will be weariness to take me back along the muddied path that seeps over hill - no one to meet, walking, while such earlyness lasts. And it is good, this solitary silence - once, a few times, I have, being late, seen strangers approaching, and shyly, wary like an animal, have crept away into woods, or beyond some hedge, keeping thus my own strange company: no human words to break the bleakness or the slight joyiness of mood.

So there is a kind of living, a kind of thinking, for me - seven months beyond her death, with no religious faith, belief, to bring me company. Thus, I am alone, again. And yet, there is this, this being-here, where the rain washes away the tears that some leaves briefly held after they fell as they fell from

one man, anguished in one moment of one walk on one day one warmish Winter. No bright Sun, today, rising over hill: although somehow, for some reason, there comes that slow muted joy to bring a slight brief smile - for there is Life, around, beings living as they live; one future, one present, to connect one consciousness since I am a living in illusion.

So brief, the insight, and I am become again one man ambling toward old age, slowly climbing with my Ash walking-stick the steep slope of a hill. Soon, there will be tea, toast, a seat by the window, as the rain of dull day beats down, again. So brief, that insight: but sufficient as often to keep me dreaming, replete, for many hours, today...

DW Myatt

December 2006 CE

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## The Scent of Meadow Grass

Four days on from Fran's death, and I am in one of the ancient meadows on the Farm - soon, the haymaking will begin, again, but for now I can smell that special smell - the scent - of meadow grass growing in hot June Sun.

The varied grasses are at least knee high; often higher - and I startle a Deer, hiding, as I walk through the grass: up it leaps to bound and leap away to escape through a hole in the far hedge where the Oak, now full in leaf, rises so tall above me, only a faint breeze to disturb its leaves. Over the field, a Buzzard circles, occasionally calling while small Cumulus clouds drift under the blue sky of another English Summer. Around, over, the pond where I sit, Damsel flies, and two dark blue large Dragonflies, skitting, dancing, mating, landing - for the flow of life goes on.

Why such warm almost cloudless weather? It is not as if I wish my sadness, my grief, my guilt to be lifted and taken from me - but, still, a certain beauty touches me, bringing a few moments of peace. Shall I strive to push these aside, and remember, again, as yesterday when I walked through nettles, letting them sting my bare hands and arms? Now, a stripped yellow Dragonfly ventures forth over the pond - to be attacked, driven away by the Blue as two Blackbirds, tree dwelling and five hedge-Oaks apart, sing their varied, long-lasting songs, for the flow of living goes on.

So many Damsel flies, now, I have lost count, and, then, a Ruddy Darter lands on a leaf, feet from my feet. For minutes, it is still, as, around me, Bumblebees and fastly-moving, loud, flies pass by in their seemingly random way. On a nearby fallen branch - some small, glossy, black, winged insect scoops out dead wood with its legs, having made a perfectly round, small, hole above the sunken leaf litter where black Beetles scutter, to dive down to what is their deep. Then, a Bumblebee drops, stumbly, briefly, down to the very edge, as if to drink, for the flow of life goes on.

Is there meaning, for me, here? It would seem so in these brief moments - and yet, and yet there is no Fran to return to, no Fran sitting here, sharing such moments. But is she, in some indefinable numinous way, here beyond the bounds of memory, Time, grief, and thought? I do not know, only knowing a certain vague, mysterious feeling, which might just be imagination. Now, I must arise and walk: no sleep, here, as in the years gone by when I would lie down among this warm grass to feel the peace that lives in such a place as this.





## The Sun of Mid-September

A small black winged insect lands on my knee as I sit on the grass waiting, to write - I do not know what this insect is, but it is slowly cleaning its long antennae and then its wings which briefly catch the Sun and iridess. Such complexity, in miniature - such life, living, as it lives.

It is just past mid-September and warm, very warm, with small Cumulus clouds beneath a joyful sky of blue and I am awake, it seems, at last, from the daily dream of the past six or more weeks when I sleep-walked through life to wake only briefly, so briefly, to cry unexpected as when I two days ago walked one narrow path where trees reared up, arching over as some cathedral isle, and bright morning sunlight filtered and fractured to touch me, the ground, the life that grew, seeping, around. I cried then such tears as saw me crouched, hunched up, then kneeling - feeling the sorrowful tragedy of her loss, her dying: of my mistakes. A sorrow which the wakeing-dreaming-sleep of those past weeks kept me distant from as I, again and foolishly, meddled, wrote, postured, to keep pain and experience away through a desire, a hope, to believe; through the gestures and words of prayer; through articles written. For I had felt again that I knew; that I had words to issue forth - some role again to help me live and keep such life as mine alive beyond that tragedy of self-inflicted death.

Such tears began to break such illusion, such wakeing-dreams, down. Now - so green this grass, so warm this Sun of mid-September that I cannot sleep or hold this role any longer. There is, can be, nothing but the flow of life which I as one living being cannot hope to contain, constrain, for I am, in being, no-one and nothing; only one fleeting flicker of life as that insect, living, flickers briefly to fly away lost to sight under Sun.

There are images, of Space, to remember: one nexion, here, sitting upon grass, among the billions presented here on one planet orbiting one star in one Galaxy among billions. So many, so many - that I am become again what I am, was, one fallen leaf drifting, flowing down one stream in one field in one land on this one planet among so many. I have no power to really change what-is, what-was; no power of bringing-into-being; no power to even really know; only living, breathing, dying.

So there is a smile, fine words flowing of knowing not to cause suffering again - words written before this failure, born from weakness. For I know my failure, here, these past weeks - no excuse, not even that wordless, strong, desire to live beyond the grief, beyond the nothingness without her, beyond the faith that clung to life, hoping for redemption in a total loyal submission to the one God beyond all gods. Such loyalty is troubling, still... But it is the warmth of Sun, the green of grass, that brings me back, for there is only the brief touching of such beauty as we can find, discover, know; only the thin, faint, hope to somehow bear and carry this to others - to pass the numinous knowing on so that someone, somewhere, somewhen can transcend, themselves, feeling the living matrix, beyond, where in ending we merge, again, one being-become.

All else is insufficient, illusion, delusion, for there is what there is. Yet I am weak, worn out from

experience, loss upon loss, mistake following mistake, so there is, shall be, can be, only a living from moment to moment; no plans to follow then deny; no aims to strive or hope for.

The Swallows of Summer have gone, and I smile as I run my hand through the warming, growing, grass in this field where the breeze does not move the acorn as it falls, tree to ground, here by the pond set and drying below leaf-shedding Willow. My tears can never fill this - and it might be good to die now, in this peaceful warmth as the Craneflies rise to stumble to briefly live before life leaves them without a knowing such as this.

So, there is now only the living of existence; only the quiet slow semi-joyful waiting for this life to slowly, quickly, painless or with pain, dimly end to be returned, perchance transformed. Only being, beyond desire: one cloud but briefly passing making many faces under Sun...

DW Myatt

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## Toward Compassion

A strange month - and an even stranger past ten days - with only a few walks away from the Farm, and even fewer visits beyond this village where I dwell. Today - three months on from Fran's death - there is the warming Sun between early Autumn showers, and it is good to be still, again, where the streaming silence of Nature is heard in voice and song: leaves, breeze moved; flies, seeking warmth and food; birds, calling; sheep, in the distant field where the two Buzzards hover, almost playing over the large tree of oak.

For over a month a return to those abstractions that so often held me in thrall, despite the rare journey and trek in company that found me sitting above the sea while small ragged Cumulus clouds grew, upwards, to move across the horizon, and a Sparrow Hawk, swift, pursued three small birds, dipping, over bramble and bush, until one died, caught, that another life might live.

A month, and more, betrayed, as I, in my stupidity and remorse and weakness and forgetting and desire for duty, provoked by dishonourable events, sought to return to one discarded answer. One Hawk pursuing one nexion of Life. But now, the clouds, here, build, to rise again to cover such a warming Sun as brings a joy to life; covering, to bring, in a few hours, the rain, much needed to seed the dry ground with life. Now: so many numinous moments to remember it is as if the sleep beyond the brief life we lead desires to claim me when I can recall in smiling peaceful joy the passing of times shared when love lived as it lives between two people whose horizon is the limit of their dwelling and their dreams.

For twenty days, a vacuous striving perhaps stirring suffering, conflict. But there was no belief, anymore - only a drab dryness, the inhuman concealing of that love, that compassion, that empathy, that understanding so painfully, so remorsefully gained. Yet there was a desire to believe; a hope of belief that kept me there, day after day, sometimes writing. But it was only one forgetting - ten days, then another ten days, then another ten days long. Why? No God, Allah, no Angels, no lover, to oversee, castigate, remind. Only the memory of the past days, weeks, months; only the struggle during those ten days to seek the warmth of Nature and of Sun. But now, by sea, Sun, dreams, moments remembered, I am rescued; returned: he was no longer me, never could be me, again, for there is, in Nature, no straight, perfect, abstract line, only the growing that grows, turning, as it grows in its own way, its own slow Time.

The trap was mine, and I fell into it: the trap of duty, of forgetting suffering caused or nascent in the illusive striving to redeem; in the striving to strive to right some perceived wrong, in the striving born of desire to be more than a man, waiting, half-dead from grief, content with field, Farm, bereavement, the darker days as Summer cooled to change to Autumn's cloudful rain. There is - was - no excuse: the failure, the weakness, the forgetting, was, and is, mine. And so, I ask again: how shall I never forget, again?

Now, I shall walk to where Summer's long heat has dried the pond - there, where the Willows gather round to shade a man who has slept so many moments in peaceful dreams while the Church bells, two miles distant from the meadows, tolled as they toll, each Sunday, decade upon century, here in this English land I love. Would that she were here to greet me, to share such rebirth as this humbled man walks joyfully back toward compassion...

How can I never forget, again?

DW Myatt

[The Sun of Mid-September](#)

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Note by DWM, June 2006: The following is taken from an e-mail sent to a long-standing friend

### A Silent Dweller

Yet again I have spent an hour or so sitting in the hot Sun in the garden of this Farm, feeling and thinking many things, on a day before that day which marks a month since Fran's tragic death.

Something seems to have happened at, or because of, my brief stay at the monastery : something slowly grown, within me, as a result of being there, and I do not understand how or why this is so. Perhaps it was the time alone, in silence. Or the many attempts to pray, to believe. Or the knowledge of my failings, laid bare among such surroundings and among such people of genuine goodness. I do not know, and do not, really, even wish to work such things out. It just is what it is - a gentle, but wonderful, appreciation of the innate beauty and goodness of life, which I felt, and feel, is in some indefinable way a gift from Fran, something which gives her death some meaning, at least to me.

This feeling first suffused me a few days ago in the hills when, cycling along a quiet lane, I stopped on a warm and sunny morning to hear two Skylarks above a field of Poppy-filled wheat: life in all its quiet stillness was beautiful and good, then, and it was as if Fran, or something of her, was around, with her somehow and faintly smiling in that way she often smiled. So, on my return, I quickly wrote out my *The Ineffable Goodness* poem, as some attempt at a positive tribute for her.

Now, a few days further on, I am beginning to feel somewhat re-assured about life, again - remembering all the good times, the good days, Fran and I shared, and feeling that she may at last have found the peace that certainly eluded her for most of the last two troubled years of her life. Thus, there are for me moments of happiness, again - and moments of sadness because she cut short her life even though so many people, myself included, loved her, and even though she had such beauty, such talents, such promise of happiness had she only been able to appreciate herself as others appreciated her. So, both the happiness and the sadness merge to form something, in me - something new; something deep, and strange, so that I am beginning again to sense that warm glowing goodness and beauty which is and can be presenced in some numinous music, in some Art, in good, compassionate deeds, in prayer, and especially in a noble personal love.

Where does this leave me, now? With a certain knowing of how Fran changed me for the better, and with a desire to remember this discovery, this insight: to transform myself, my life, through a calm,

compassionate, acceptance and use whatever causal time remains to me to gently do what is right, to cease to cause suffering, to accept the beauty of each moment, in a numinous way, and to remember Fran with the dawning and the ending of each day.

There remains, of course, the difficult, perplexing, sometimes still troubling question of belief, of prayer - but I feel this is resolving itself, as such things often do, in its own slow, inner way. Not a sudden moment of insight, but instead a gradual dawning, as when Sun slowly breaks through a thin but total covering of cloud in Spring and Autumn to bring that blue I, we, so admire and which seems to express something of the wonder of life, of Nature, of the Cosmos. Hence, there is an increasing awareness, for me, of Nature, of us as one connexion; an awareness of The Numinous Way, manifest in compassion, empathy, gentleness and honour. Above all manifest in gentleness, in letting-be; in an appreciation of how the numen is and can be presenced, in us, in our lives.

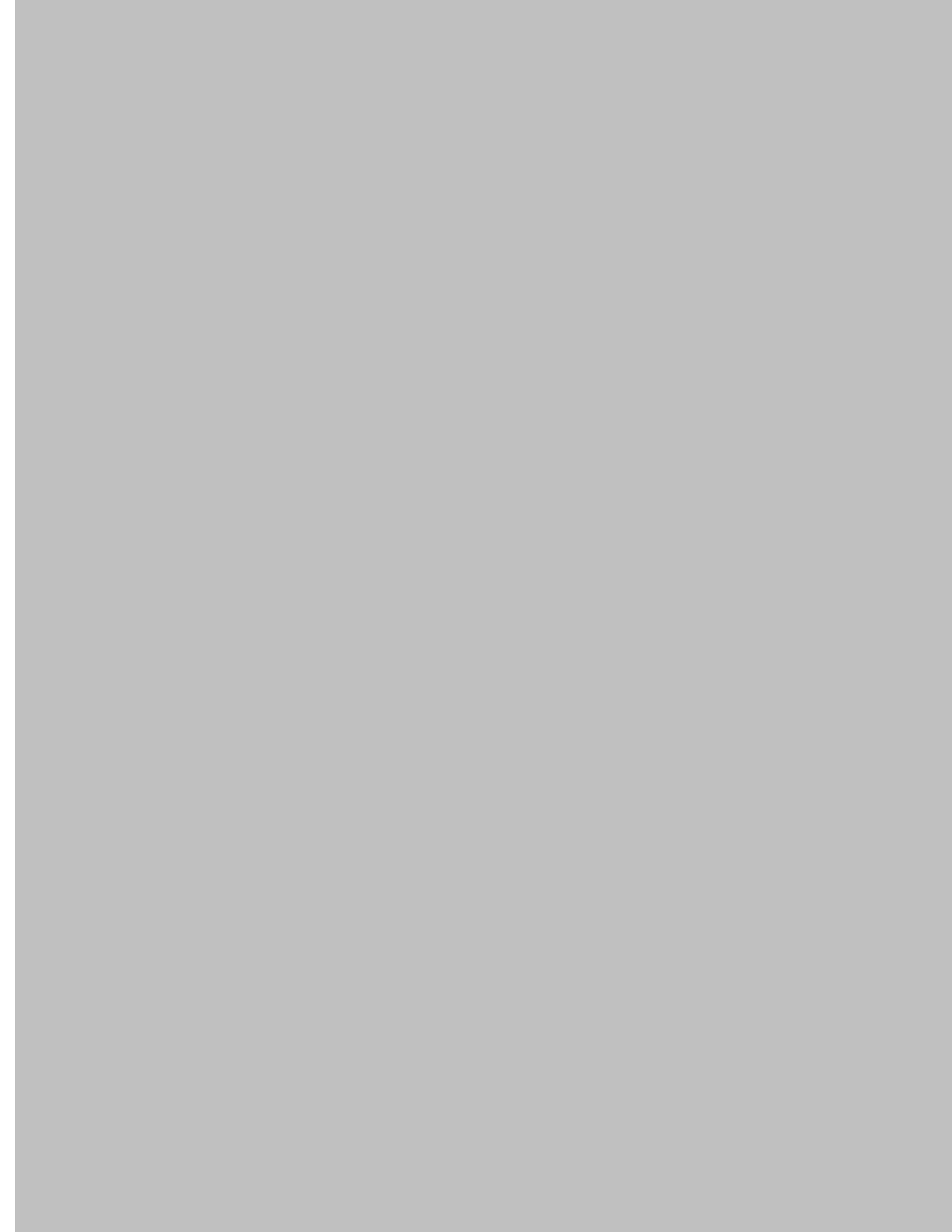
Thus, I am calm again, for the moment, gently remembering the beautiful Frances, and hoping that I can live up to my own words, as monk, or nun, hopes in silent, contemplative, prayer to live up to the Jesus within, and external, to them. Yet - there is still a vague, rather ill-defined yearning, to be part of something beyond me, which might aid me to remember, which might and which could and which should correct me, guide me. A yearning to surrender to the beauty, the presencing, that was and is manifest in early polyphony, in the Latin Opus Dei sung in some monastic Choir. A yearning to just be in such a place, without words, without thought - suffused with the centuries of being, with the goodness, the numinous silence, that pervades cloisters, a Choir, an Abbey. I did not find that at that monastery - at least outwardly - for there was the mostly English Office; the modern buildings. Perhaps it is the essence behind all such things that I feel, that I yearn for, that I seek - the essence beyond even the Latin Opus Dei; beyond the numinous office of Latin Compline, and beyond that beautiful silent, reverent prayer before a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The essence beyond the wheatfields where Skylarks sing; beyond the beauty of some women; beyond the sharing of exquisite moments with such a woman. Beyond all such worldly things, all such causal manifestations. How to live always in and with the Essence itself? With, within, the Numen? Always in the presence of The Numen? To be at peace, and in silence, at last? I do not know - and perhaps I never will know. What I do feel, what I do believe I now know, is that all such manifestations of the Numen are important; that they all have their place, and all perhaps may serve the same ultimate purpose - that of bringing us closer to the ineffable beauty, the ineffable goodness, of life; that of transforming us, reminding us; that of giving us as individuals the chance to be good, to presence the good, to be part of the Numen itself.

Hence, there is now a real gentle tolerance in me - a silent dweller, who dreams.

DW Myatt

June 25, 2006 CE

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## Bright Purple Orchids

It is just over one month since I sat on this hill - then, it was also in the Sun of an early Summer's morning, and only a few days after Francine had killed herself, tormented as she was by despair, anguish and a deep self-deprecation. For I called her Francine - and she liked it - since it seemed to capture something of her quixotic, individual, nature which the names Frances and Fran did not really express. Now, as in the past when she was alive, I find myself still saying to myself - and sometimes out loud - "I love you Francine," as if it were some mantra that might bring her back to life.

But, yet again, I am alone - here, where there are bright purple Orchids on the lower slopes just above the tree-line and where, below, a Deer stood on the narrow footpath, watching me approach until, apparently unafraid, it sauntered off into the bushes growing by and beyond the stream that runs down through that quite small wooded valley. Overhead - the resident Buzzard, calling. Around - flies, starting their day as the warmth of the Sun increases to slowly dispel the clinging mist that lingers cloud-like over the flat land between those not-too-distant hills.

The stark cry of a Woodpecker, as it flies, dipping, from tree to tree. The loud Bumblebee, feeding on the many small flowers - blue, yellow, violet, red. The many birds - whose personal names I do not and probably never shall know - singing, in the many trees and bushes below, up from where there is a small clearing, gently rising as the hill beyond, and in which clearing two chestnut horses graze, half a mile or more from the nearest cottage whose white walls and faded-red roof break the swathe of green which, furlong upon furlong, reaches up to the very top of the hill, making my horizon: fields of pasture; hedges bursting with English-summer green

The ferns, since my last visit, are fully open, and almost all stretched fully out, and I sit on an old plastic bag, feeling the tragedy of Francine's death, and that I should be crying far more than I am now. For the tears, hours upon hour, day following day, has lessened, until - yesterday - I wept only once. So I feel guilty, partly believing I should be mourning her far more. But Nature, here, is alive and I have begun to sense again the flow of Life, sensing somehow and strangely - and hoping it is not some delusion - that she, by her dying has given me this gift, this chance; these moments to reconnect myself with Life. A chance to redeem and be redeemed, to feel the beauty and the goodness inherent in life and to know, to deeply feel, the promise of human existence - as if she by her living and her dying has not only freed herself from her own inner pain, anguish and torment, but also finally, irretrievably, freed me from that lower part of myself that still kept me in thrall, even sometimes during our relationship, to abstractions, to a wayward questing after suffering-causing ideals.

So I am embodied, here, by my being, my thoughts, my feeling - as I sense she is, and somehow alive if I feel this, if I remember this, her, if I change; if I make her sacrifice worthwhile. For there is a depth not



felt before; never quite experienced like this before; a depth of feeling; a depth of being; a deep connexion with Life, especially as it presences itself, here, around me, in me, on this hill, site of an ancient hill-fort - as if the sadness and the sorrow and the tragedy have been transformed, melded somehow with the quiet reverential joy of being in such a beautiful, still numinous aspect of Nature, to form something new, strange, far beyond words, bringing a definite knowing of myself, of my failure, a knowing of humility never known before. Thus there is a letting-be; a simple dwelling through sitting in silence and in peace, exhaling wordless and wordfull words of love. Change, life, death - all around; all here, and one day I also shall change as my beautiful Francine has changed. No fear, now; only that knowing that knows the flow for the changing it is.

Yet do such feelings, such thoughts, demean her death? Or are they merely some escape or delusion? I do not really know - I never probably will know for certain - but I hope not, even as I know I might be mistaken, in this. But this is all I have: this, the result of my month of effort, the month of tears - these slight answers; these meagre answers; these so slight positive feelings, feelings which may fade, which could fade, bringing back such anguish as caused so many thoughts of bringing forward death. For over a month, a struggle to find answers to the questions, the despair, which perplexed and often almost overwhelmed me. Faith; prayer; redemption - seeking to believe; needing to believe; desiring to pray, trying to pray. Trying again to find the answers in God; in Christianity, in Buddhism, in Taoism, in Islam, and in and from many other Ways.

But there is now, for me it seems, only the quiet sitting in places such as this; only the answers of, the development of, The Numinous Way. Only the feeling of being one connexion; only the yearning to presence the good, to cease to cause suffering; to strive to keep that silence, that non-interference, which which may well be the beginning of my own redemption and a move toward, back, to being in balance with Nature, with the Cosmos, with myself - and with the Fran who has gone, leaving me behind.

There is, here, only sky, trees, hill, and history - and no one to share such beauty, such warmth of Summer Sun. No one to lie beside and feel the yearning for that short sleep which often overcomes us in a such heat as this. Instead - a small brown spotted Butterfly passes; then, an even smaller one of brown-orange with black spots on its wings, and then a larger white of black-tipped wings. So many flowers to feed, upon - and the heat of the Sun has taken those almost-annoying flies off, away, perhaps bushward into shade, leaving me free to rest in my new strange sad-tragic-quiet-reverential-remorseful-joy while a small Cumulus cloud in an otherwise cloudless sky drifts above, to my right, making faces. A sad face; then of anger then of joy - until it, too, becomes almost formless here in this flicker of Life which passes quickly upon one planet in one Galaxy among a Cosmos, changing slowly, as it does.

So many flowers; and Grasshoppers, calling, in the longer grass, above where three Crows caw, as they caw. So much Life, bursting, burgeoning, forth, to mingle as I become mingled with a future and a past, one connexion among so many where, ten feet away, the wind-shaped sapling of Oak, no taller than a three Rabbits, hopping, curves gracefully out over lichen-covered rock

DW Myatt  
June 29, 2006 CE

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## Existence Without End

This afternoon is hot, following the long hours of rain during the night, but there is a lovely breeze as the Sun dries the Clover-filled grass where I sit resisting the temptation to sleep, stretched out, warm.

For it is so beautifully warm, this Sun, taking away for a while the sadness of the sleepless night when dreams and memories of Fran kept me, often weeping and often silently hunched by the window, listening to the rain. No music of mine, then, as I yearned to capture, to express, the almost despairing sadness of it all. There were only words; only words such as these, and not for the first time I gently envied those gifted with the talent of musical composition. But no words can express what the sounds of numinous music can and sometimes have expressed, and I was left to sigh and close my eyes to try and dream such memories of happier days as have kept me alive as the days since her death turned first to a week and then to a month, no God to bring forth the comfort and the love so desired, so needed in the bleakness of that, of this, long night.

But this Sun brings something, while it lasts - something strange: a quite quiet remembrance of the joys and beauty of life when personal love lived to suffuse us with both happiness and dreams - no death to tear us apart. Yet how many times, how often and how stupidly, did I turn away from the sharing of such love - from its value, its humanity, its goodness known only, valued only, felt only, with its loss, with such a loss as this? Turned away from - for what? Some hard, unforgiving, inhuman ideal. Turned away from - too many times these past thirty years so that a storm now wells up inside me as the clouds of the night grew, waiting to break in a tempest of tears. So stupid, the man that I was, and maybe still am.

Swallows, sweeping low over the grass; a Honey-Bee, feeding, from the clover. A small Fly, by my hand. All emanations of that flow of Life which lives, presenced on this planet which is both a dwelling and a home. Someday I - all this, here: the Fly, the Bee, the birds; the Clover - will be gone, as she is gone and as the Cumulus clouds that now drift past the hill will be gone. Gone - to where? Returned; continued; lost. changed... And what remains, of us? I do not know, and can only suggest or presume.

Yet there is something, here; some feeling, burgeoning in Sun - of Life in its essence; of consciousness, living, of compassion, love; droplets forming one whole, one river flowing from one source to one end in one sea in one moment of one Time. Thus, a brief smile, a knowing of moments where the I is at least lost as it become lost in the happiness of such sharing as love makes. No God - but a warmth of being flowing from one small beginning to one Cosmic existence without end.

Yes - she is there; as I, the Bee, the Fly, the Clover, the Swallow, the rain, the river, will be there, transformed, transmuted, one infinitesimal emanation of Thought among so many where the Cosmos evolves to be, there, where Time shall never end. Am I dreaming - or just listening to, feeling, the quiet

soft emanations of a Cosmos dreaming, breathing, seeing, being, existing in both the sadness and the love?

Now, thinking ended, I can drift into that warm sleep that so often heals... And then, for a moment, such peace it is as if the joy of death reached out to touch me, claim me. Is this, then, what touches some in that their last moment of decision? For it feels as if it is the dying which is easy - and the living which is, which can be, which will be, hard, as the despair, the burdens remain to reclaim them, me, us. But have I strength enough, dreams enough, hope enough to help me here? Yes, perhaps I have again, for a while...

DW Myatt

Afternoon of 6th July, 2006 CE

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## One Simple Numinous Answer

Thus have I, from my *pathei mathos*, come to accept that conventional faith - and all dogma, be such theological or political - rather obscures the essence, The Numen, itself. Such things I now regard as abstractions which we manufacture and impose, or project, upon Reality in a somewhat vain and arrogant attempt to "understand" it, and ourselves, and others - and which, in effect, dispose us toward pre-judgement, based on such abstractions, with such pre-judgements often being inhuman in the sense that they cause suffering or harm or destroy other life.

Thus my understanding now is of how all life - sentient and otherwise - is connected, and an expression, a presencing, of that some-thing which is beyond us (and which Nature is a part of) which some-thing I have tentatively called "The Cosmic Being". This Being is not God - but rather the Cosmos, and all life, and thus we ourselves, in-evolution: with our consciousness being a means whereby we can know this Being - and The Numinous and Beauty, which are manifestations of this connected Life, this Being. Our consciousness is also a means whereby we can change ourselves, and thus be what we have the potential to be.

For me, all Art, poetry, music, literature, and Ways of Living which capture or express (or presence) something of the numinous - which so manifest something of the beautiful, the sublime, "the primal innocence" - are or can be a means of transformation for ourselves and for others. As are - or rather as can be - some personal relationships, where love, based on loyalty and that simple sharing and trust which such personal loyalty engenders, is freely given and freely received. Indeed, I would go so far as to express the belief that it is such human love, between two human beings, which is perhaps the finest, most noble, and most beautiful expression of our humanity - and there is such a sadness in knowing how much this is not the case, now, in the world where we dwell; in knowing how so many people, knowing or unknowing, abuse and misuse such love, given to them, for their own selfish, prideful, ends.

In a very important sense, we are The Cosmic Being: we are other life, we are the very Cosmos itself, although as human beings we just do not perceive this or feel this, yet. And so, being a connexion to other life, we can harm or aid this other life and ourselves, and thus harm or aid and help to assist and evolve, The Cosmic Being itself.

To so perceive, feel and understand, our connexion - which sublime Art, music (and so on) and some moments of some personal relationship are intimations of - we require empathy. From empathy there is compassion, and from both arises that desire to cease to cause suffering to other living beings: to live in such a way that we ourselves are changed, moment to moment, by remembering the numinous and by feeling the numinous both within us and without.

To do this, we do not need "prayer" - or belief in some deity or deities; and we especially do not need some theology or indeed any dogma. All we need is a certain numinous apprehension; an empathic way of seeing and being which burgeons forth into a wordless compassion; the faculty of remembering how

we are but one connexion, but one transient part of one cosmic flow which began somewhere, long ago, and which will change to-be something else in some future.

Which leads us on to the very purpose of our individual lives, which I personally understand as transcending - through our mortal life's ending - to where we merge back into Life itself; returned to the Cosmos; to be part of the very consciousness of a still imperfect and still changing and still evolving Cosmic Being.

Thus, what motivates us is not the hope of some personal "reward" given to us by some deity; nor even the hope of attaining for ourselves some kind of Paradise or Nirvana. Rather, the motivation is supra-personal. For what motivates us is the reality which so plainly exists: the reality of ourselves as a loving connexion to life, to Nature, and to the Cosmos; the reality of empathy - of how we have the ability to go beyond our animal, our barbaric, past, and perceive and feel beyond the ego and even the self; the reality of suffering, and how we can cease to cause suffering and so aid Life and the very change and evolution of the Cosmos.

From all this there derives a particular and quite simple morality - a guide to personal behaviour - and a particular way of living. Our moral guide is empathy, and the personal honour and compassion that derives from this. There is thus a living in the moment; an acceptance of Life; and yet also a remembrance of suffering and tragedy, and a wordless but very numinous hope. This numinous hope is that born by the new cosmic perspective which our awareness of ourselves as one connexion brings us. Thus do we feel the centuries, the millennia, before us, and after us, and thus do we place contemporary events in perspective.

Hence there is an understanding that the only way the world - people - will change in any significant and ethical way, is by the difficult change within each and every individual: through perception, through them developing empathy, and through a living based upon that empathy, and that all we, as individuals can do, is strive to live in an ethical way ourselves, trusting, hoping, that our lives, our artistic and musical emanations, can aid such a numinous transformation of others.

DW Myatt

[Extract from a letter to a friend. I have amended the text slightly to remove typos and clarify the sense in one or two particular places.]

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## One Small Missive To A Friend

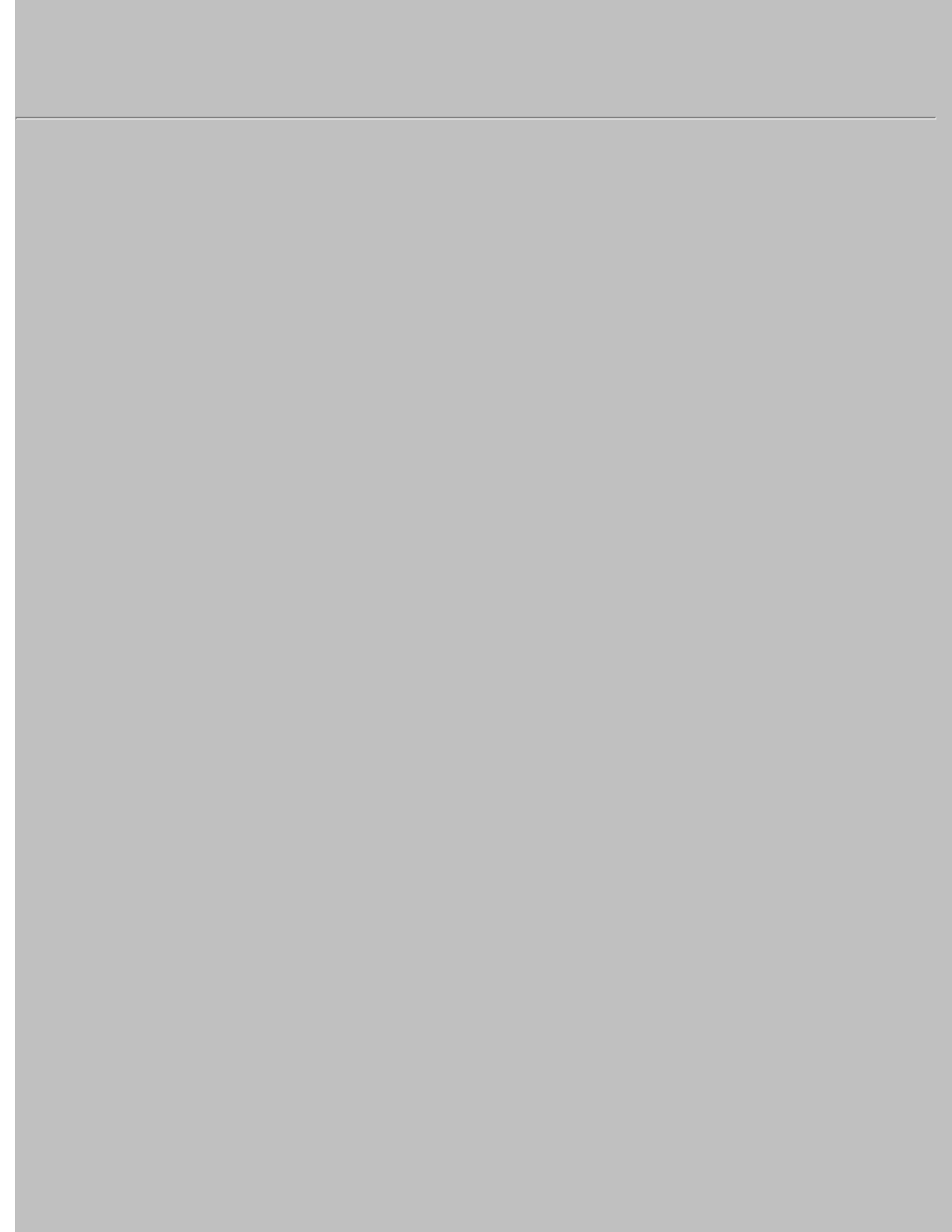
Too much sadness; far too much sorrow - from the knowing, the feeling, of my mistakes; from the knowing - the feeling - of having caused so much suffering. So I listen to the Aria from Bach's BWV 82 and I am overwhelmed. Tears of sadness, beauty, suffering, knowing: overcome with too little and yet too much: so much suffering for so little apprehension gained. So much suffering before, century upon century, for so little change, and I am left remembering as I was this morning under warming late August Sun when I wandered among the meadow-fields to sit myself upon dew-covered grass and close my eyes while the sun-warmth of an English Summer brought one small moment of an almost tragic respite.

No faith to redeem; no prayer to ease if only for a while the hurting burden of remorse. No allegory of hope to grasp and hold in needful arms which reach out to only the emptiness of this room, only the emptiness of that field where a Buzzard flew to shade me so briefly perhaps so fittingly from Sun. Yet - and yet - there is an intimation; one intimation, one reaching out beyond God, deity, toward a new burgeoning supra-personal love that I cannot quite grasp. Elusive, as the haunting dreams of night only partially remembered when we, sleepfull still, awake to hope that we can at least begin to hope, again.

One intimation of one needfull wordless love born from such a temporal knowing as breaks me down to one connexion upon one Earth; one transient form, fleeting between life, sorrow, death. Thus is there that deepfull needfull knowing of how I am cloud, dew, seed, soil and Sun; of how the years have worn me down to be only what I am: as the small golden Beetle crawled upwards upon that one stalk of breeze-swayed grass to be in that moment of my morning one connexion undefined undefinable of and to one unknown Cosmic Being breaking through while I sat in silence, observing as I the almost-broken did observe then in one pure undefiled moment of almost peace and purity of an undirected unrequited love...

And so the music and memory end, to leave this, only this; only such feeble words as these as burgeons forth again that yearning to be only and ever alone in such silence and solitude as may keep me mindful, hopeful, unable to cause or seek to cause ever again any suffering and able thus to feel again one more such moment of that elusive blissful-sadness.

*Thus there is no longer any need nor desire in me to be, by others, understood...*





## We Love Unsuspecting

A quite relaxing day, for me: a day of unexpected sunshine and September warmth after so many dull and rainy days, and I spent most the hours of the daylight morning in the fields, or sitting by the large pond listening to the song of the birds, watching the Dragonflies, the Butterflies and the pond life, with the afternoon spent in gentle gardening, and then just sitting in the warming Sun.

There has been thus moments of pleasure, peace and joy, as of those remembered times when one's distant gentle lover comes, if only briefly, to stay with one, again. Thus was I, thus am I, brought back, or moved forward, to just-be in the flow of Life as Life flows, slowly, when we gently let-go of that perception which is our small and often selfish self: to feel, to be-again, not apart from Nature.

Hence I am again but one life slowly dwelling in some small part of a rural England that I strive to keep within me by the slow movement of only walking, or cycling, along the country lanes, and which never takes me far from the meadow fields or from the hills which rear up, wooded, less than half a mile away.

Thus has there been time for that calm thinking that arises slowly, naturally, as the Cumulus cloud arose this morning, early, to briefly shade the Sun before they, the clouds, changed so slowly to leave me where my horizon of sighted landscape ended, far beyond the farthest trees, hedge, and hill that I could see. And thus was there a slow thinking about, a dwelling upon, your question of balance.....

*Do you find you are still unsatisfied as to path? Or did you find/are still finding, a synthesis between the many? It's the Balance I find that I seek, and hope for.*

.....and yet, for myself, I feel it is more a question of change than of balance, as if we, as a species, are poised, caught, between the past of our animal ancestral nature and the future that surely awaits us if we can change, evolve, into a different kind of being, perhaps into an almost new species. Thus do I sense us, now, as in transition and yet mesmerized, held-back, even imprisoned, by the things we in our hubris-like cleverness have constructed: by the words, the terms, the very language, we have manufactured in order to try and understand ourselves, others, and this world.

Thus do we now interpret others, ourselves, the world - Reality - by abstractions which we project: which we have mentally-constructed and to which we assign "names" and terms, thus obscuring, hiding, the very essence itself, and thus mistaking such manufactured things for this essence.

Thus have we and for example manufactured a concept called a "nation" and a "State", and have theories of how to govern such constructs, and manufactured "laws" to ensure some kind of abstract "order" within such places, as millions have given their "loyalty" to such abstract things and fought and died and caused great suffering in order to "defend" them or bring them into-being. Thus have we given "names" to differences among and within ourselves - based on some outward "sign" such as skin colour or on

some inner sign such as a perceived or assumed "religious" or "political" belief - and thus dishonourably, un-empathically, used such "differences" as a criteria of worth and judgement, and in the process often or mostly behaving in a quite inhuman way. For all such abstractions - however named or described - seem to me to obscure The Numinous: obscure the simple reality which is of the connectedness, the acausal unity, of all Life.

I am as guilty as anyone in having done such things, for - for nearly four decades - I believed in or upheld some such abstraction or other, and used such things as not only a measure of the meaning of my own life, but also as a criteria of judgement, just as I often used violence in pursuit of such abstractions. It did not matter that I sincerely believed my inner intentions were noble and "good"; what mattered was that all such abstractions caused suffering for someone, or some many, somewhere. For such suffering was a natural consequence of those abstractions, constructed and manufactured as such things were by us in our vain arrogance.

Of course, many have understood this, or felt this, over the millennia - as some Ways have been developed to try and move us back toward the reality of connectedness. But always - always, it seems to me - over causal time, the simple unaffected pure meaning, the suffering insight, becomes lost in the words and through dogma, especially through dogma, and in particular through our very need, our very desire, to strive to "attain" some-thing, or to follow some-thing, or someone.

Perhaps only in music, Art, literature, poetry, a personal loyal love, and such-like emanations - in those things which wordlessly capture if only for a moment the Numinous itself - there is and has been a reminder of what-is, of what can-be. Of what we have forgotten and what we have glimpsed or have the capacity to glimpse, to feel, to know.

It seems to me, finally, that there are no answers, because no questions exist; we only impose questions upon what-is. For we have this need to make complex what is simple; we have this Promethean irritation within us. Certainly, this inner irritation, this inability to be empathic with Life (except perhaps in moments) brings us or can bring us joy, ecstasy, and can move us toward a different and at times exhilarating existence - as I know from my own not inactive, woman-loving, and sometimes warrior-like, life. But such a living I sense and feel is only a stasis, a repeat of our often barbaric, animal-like, past, and not the change, the evolution, we need and which surely is possible now, from the understanding the past five thousand years or so has given us.

Thus, my Path now is my Path - which in my temerity I have called The Numinous Way, and which, as it exists now due to the metamorphosis of recent years, represents the results of my ponderings, my thinking, my feelings, and what little knowledge I have acquired from *pathei mathos*.

*Have you found that the seekers path has brought you as much joy as sorrow?*

"Always a dream or a memory

Lead us on  
And we wait like children  
Trusting in the spirits of the Earth.  
We love unsuspecting  
While they our lovers scheme,  
Succour themselves on our blood  
And bleed us dry..."

In truth I have found, over four decades of seeking, more sorrow than joy - and yet the sorrow now seems to have merged with the joy to become some-thing which is of both yet beyond both. A new way of feeling, perhaps; or a new way of being, far beyond any words I know, and certainly beyond any and all the various and many Ways and Paths I have experienced and lived. But, of course, there are times - many times - when the sadness seeps back to bring forth burgeoning tears.

All I have from four decades of strife, seeking, searching, questions - of a learning from my plenitude of mistakes - are some tentative scribblings of my own, manifest in The Numinous way, with its Cosmic Ethics, its emphasis on empathy, compassion and honour, and its understanding of how our manufactured abstractions cause and continue to cause suffering, re-enforce our hubris, obscure our connexion to the Cosmos, and distance us from The Numinous.

DW Myatt

2454723.351

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## Both Ennoble and Complete

My own apologies for a lateness in replying are due, caused in part by quite lovely times on the last warm Sunny days of last week, walking along and climbing up sea-side cliffs, and strolling in breezeful loneliness the nearby sandy and pebble-strewn beaches; and, in part, by being again for a few days a part of another adventurous and dangerous world.

Now, here at the Farm (sanctuary) the wind has turned colder and stronger, clouds obscure the warmth of the Sun, and flecks of rain impinge upon my window as I sit at my desk listening to the Fourth Symphony of Brahms, whose beautiful First and Second Movements always seems to me to capture that sublime joy, that hope, and that poignant sorrow, that so often describes our personal relationships. Thus, are so many memories returned: and amid the mixed remembering there is such a numinous intimation of how good it is to be healthy and alive so that the drying tears of only moments ago are only the drying tears of a past that has brought us this briefest wisdom of our knowing. Thus is there - and yet again perhaps foolishly - such a straining almost painful yearning for that personal love which we so earnestly believe can both ennoble and complete...

*I'm still too much in love with life, with desire, with abandon and childlike needs, of Nature and adventure and the Quest.*

Perhaps it always should be thus: that the dichotomy we feel - between actively being and seeking, and between resting, seeking solitude and often replete with some new sorrow and hope of inner peace - will be always with us. For how else do we inspire ourselves to create? How else do we - perhaps only in some small way - inspire others? How else do we - knowing, feeling - keep alive that adventurous, reckless, childful, part of ourselves which, secretly, in our darkest moments of sorrow, we perhaps never desire to completely cease to live?

For myself, this dichotomy has never, despite my many words and hopes, been completely resolved, and even when I begin in vanity, arrogance and pride to delude myself it has (as recently), my inner impish self returns to somehow in some way break the fetters of peace and solitude so carefully, painfully, constructed: as happened, again, only last week. Perhaps it is that we who know, feel, such a division, within - who have lived it for almost all our adult lives - cannot ever and should not try to escape this our true nature which is both of joyful passion and of a sorrowing pain. Or perhaps it is (and more likely) that for such as us it only ever and truly ends when we perchance find that special person who so completely and with honour completes us.

Now, I shall take myself out into the meadow fields again, to feel the wind, the cold, remembering the joy and the sorrow of so many pasts.

DW Myatt  
2454743.993

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## Between Dishonour and Desire

The clouded sky of most of the daylight hours has given way at last to breaks of blue, and - another day's work over - I sit by the window that overlooks the hills beyond where trees begin that turning of colour which so marks the downward part of an English Autumn - and my very being is moved as there plays within this room Bach's so numinous *Aria Ich habe genug*.

Thus does beauty live, again, and somewhere, here: as if I reaching out can almost touch its very being as one might reach to touch one's nearby gentle loving lover. But: there is instead only that ache, that sighing, that knowing of a loneliness, clinging - kept small, undepressing, by only memories of so many times, pastly shared, which in their dwelling bring some solace, as out beyond such a presencing of beauty here we still in our, in this, moment feel so many people of this world subsumed in folly, lostness: hubris hiding compassion, a personal love hiding somewhere between dishonour and desire.

Yet, and yet - we have to hope; to cling to such a wistful dream of ours as the early mist of yesterday's sun-full morning clung to the meadow fields of the Farm as I alone walked among the trees, by hedges, while the light of Dawn broke to reveal a clear sky which sucked away that mist from dewy ground, mist-fully rising only feet, only a few feet, above where the tops of the still growing grass, now only sparsely flowered, gave way to the still cold air seeping up toward the horizon of my dreaming brightening so slowly warming sky.

Thus are there tears as one man's so small being seeks a Cosmos where belief knows, learns, cares and yet still so honourably desires. But this is not, yet, that death where one might so easily so peacefully pass to that which awaits, beyond - for there seems, feels, so much more living still to do; so many more spaces of causal Time to so drearily fill with ordinary life until we again can be taken away by such sublime perfection of another numinous moment such as this...

DW Myatt

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## Return to The Numinous Way

In the last weeks of April, 2009 AD, Myatt began revising several of his articles about his Numinous Way. As he stated in the *Introduction* to the published collection of these revised essays:

" This book is a collection of essays related to The Numinous Way, which essays attempt to elucidate this new ethical philosophy, based upon empathy, compassion, and honour, which I have developed, and refined, over a period of many years, and which philosophy - which Way of Life - thus expresses my own conclusions about life. These conclusions are the result of a four-decade long *pathei mathos*: the result of my many and diverse and practical (and, to many others, weird and strange) involvements (political, and otherwise), and my many and diverse and practical quests among the philosophies, Ways of Life, and religions, of the world. The Numinous Way is, in particular, the result of the often difficult process of acknowledging my many personal mistakes - many of which caused or contributed to suffering - and (hopefully) learning from these mistakes.

The essays presented here represent the culmination of my own thinking, and thus supersede all other essays of mine about, or concerning, The Numinous Way, and what I, previously, called The Numinous Way of Folk Culture. For there has been, for me, a profound change of emphasis, a following of the cosmic ethic of empathy to its logical and honourable conclusion, and thus a rejection of all unethical abstractions, including those of the nation, of what is termed "race", and what I previously, in more unempathic days, referred to as "the folk". It is empathy, compassion and honour which are paramount - the living of an ethical way of life by individuals which is important - not some outward, causal, form, nor the classification and (unethical) judgment of individuals according to some abstraction, some stereotype, some dogma, some ideology, or some theory. " *The Numinous Way of Life: Empathy, Compassion, and Honour*

His return to his own - if revised - rather mystical, and somewhat pagan, philosophy - or *Weltanschauung* - was privately confirmed in several letters, and e-mails, which he sent me in late April, and which he later confirmed with the distribution of his new autobiographical essays, where he writes:

"There [was] a stubborn clinging to doing what I conceived to be my honourable duty, and it is only in the last month that I have finally and to my own satisfaction resolved, in an ethical way, the dilemma of such a duty, thus ending my association with a particular Way of Life, which Way many consider a religion."

In his most recent private correspondence, he admits that the resolution of his personal conflict - resulting from the aforementioned dilemma regarding duty - was both difficult and not straightforward, involving as it did over a period of more than two years, several returns, by him to the submission of Islam because he believed that he had a duty to uphold a certain oath of honor which he gave. That is, he had previously, and over a period of some two or more years, come to a variety of conclusions about what he circumlocutiously describes as *a particular Way of Life, which Way many consider a religion*, with these conclusions deriving from both his *pathei mathos* - his personal learning from experience - and his continuing "reflexion upon certain ethical, ontological and epistemological questions". However, despite these conclusions of his, his personal misgivings, he still believed that he was honor bound to uphold, propagate, and be seen to be doing what he regarded as his duty to this "other Way of Life, given an oath I had sworn, on my honour, years previously..." Hence the many effusions, in support of this other Way, which he continued to pen, and publish, during this time, and until only recently.

Thus, and for quite some time, he attempted to "forget my own answers, born from my thinking, my experience, and especially from the tragedy of the suicide of loved one...." and instead tried, as many religious minded people tend to do, to believe it was all some kind of personal trial given by God:

"We shall try you in good and bad ordeals, and to the Unity you shall return." (Koran: 21, 35)

But that did not work; the doubts remained; the affinity with his own conclusions - as evident in his development of his own Numinous Way philosophy - not only remained, but grew stronger. He even spent many months, nearly two years ago now, writing at great length about the problem of suffering in relation to the ethics of Islam, attempting to reconcile his Islam, and his propagation of violent Jihad (which he then still understood as a Muslim duty), with the understanding of honor and compassion as manifest in his developing Numinous Way philosophy - now based firmly on empathy and compassion - which mystical philosophy was, as he admitted in his private correspondence with me, but a manifestation of his own answers, his own true inner feelings and nature. Then, he seemed to me, and for quite some while, as he clung on to his duty as a Muslim, to be veering toward Sufism.

In the end, however, he found he could not reconcile the answers, the ethics, of The Numinous Way, with any form of Islam. Furthermore, he could not resolve the continuing dilemma of duty and honor, until, according to his own account, he perceived:

"How honour is only and ever personal and relates to, depends upon, empathy and thus is connected to compassion - to the desire to cease to cause suffering - and that such personal honour does not and cannot reside in loyalty and duty to some abstraction, to some-thing, or to some person no longer alive." (*Autobiographical Notes*, Part 3, dated 2454948.373 )

But he was still troubled by what he later described (in *A Change of Perspective*) as "the principle of



idealism, the guiding principle of most of my adult life," and thus admitted that he was "still in thrall to my own old nature which bade me, sometimes, to react to some dishonourable event, somewhere, and try to do something to counter such dishonour against others in whatever way I could..." (*Autobiographical Notes*, Part 3).

It was only when he recently rejected the "guiding principle" of most of his adult life that he unequivocally returned to his own philosophy, accepting that this was the ethical, the honorable, thing to do.

"This principle of idealism, the guiding principle of most of my adult life, is unethical, and therefore fundamentally wrong and inhuman. That is, it is a manufactured abstraction; a great cause of suffering, and that nothing - no idealism, no cause, no ideal, no dogma, no perceived duty - is worth or justifies the suffering of any living-being, sentient or otherwise. That it is empathy, compassion and a personal love which are human, the essence of our humanity: not some abstract notion of duty; not some idealism. That it is the impersonal interference in the affairs of others - based on some cause, some belief, some dogma, some perceived duty, some ideology, some creed, some ideal, some manufactured abstraction - which causes and greatly contributes to suffering, and which moves us far away from empathy and compassion and thus diverts us from our humanity and from changing ourselves, in a quiet way, into a more evolved, a more empathic and more compassionate, human being." *A Change of Perspective*

Finally, he admitted that,

"The Numinous Way - as now developed, and as explicated by me in the past month [ April, 2009 ] - represents my true nature: the hard, difficult, re-discovery of what I had controlled, and lost; and, perhaps more importantly, an evolution of that personal nature as a result of my diverse experiences, my learning from my mistakes, and my empathic awareness of the suffering I have caused to others.

Hence, I have been, for many decades, wrong; misguided. Or, rather, I misguided myself, allowing idealism and a perceived duty to triumph over, to veil, my humanity. My good intentions were no excuse, even though, for nearly four decades, I made them an excuse, as idealists always do." *A Change of Perspective*

Hence, it does seem as if - judging by Myatt's own accounts of the matter - that his recent inner struggle, in respect of duty and idealism and regarding Islam, lasted for some three years or more; that this recent inner struggle was only the last part of a decade long "alchemical process of inner change" which began with his initial development of his Numinous Way philosophy in or around 1998 AD; and that his association with, and learning from, Islam, during this decade, provided a necessary if not crucial element in this process of personal transformation, enabling him to go, as he states, "far beyond the

unethical abstractions of both race and my earlier concept of the folk...and thus to follow the ethic of empathy and compassion to its logical and honourable conclusion, explicated as this conclusion is now in my revised essays about The Numinous Way, presented as these essays are in the collection *The Numinous Way of Life: Empathy, Compassion, and Honour.*"

It is, perhaps, worth emphasizing that the Numinous Way Myatt has returned to is a much revised, ethical, development of his mystical philosophy where, as he importantly states in several revised articles (such as [Questions About Race, The Folk, and The Numinous Way](#)) both "nationalism" and the concepts of race, and "the folk", are rejected, being regarded as unethical abstractions, and thus have no place in his Numinous Way.

Furthermore, Myatt is, in my view, to be commended for honestly revealing the details of this difficult process of personal transformation, as detailed especially in his (now published) private letters, and several essays, written between 2006 AD and 2008 AD. He might also be commended - minor reservations regarding "sinister rôles" aside - for his spiritual and rather mystical odyssey this past decade or more; an odyssey which has taken him from being a violent neo-nazi street activist - the "most evil nazi in Britain" - to being a Muslim; to embracing multi-racialism, and propagating violent Jihad; to finally returning to the humanity evident in his ethical, "numinous", philosophy of empathy and compassion.

However, I am inclined to agree with Myatt that he will not be understood, and that he "will continue to be judged, by others, according to some, or all, of my former beliefs, involvements..."

JRW  
April, 2009 AD

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## A Change of Perspective

Over the past decade there has been, for me, a complete change of perspective, for I have gone from upholding and violently propagating the racialism of National-Socialism - and encouraging the overthrow of the existing *status quo* through revolutionary insurrection - to the acceptance of empathy and compassion, and to that gentle, quiet, desire to cease to cause suffering, which form the basis for what I have called The Numinous Way, with this Numinous Way being apolitical, undogmatic, and considering both race and "the folk" as unethical abstractions which move us away from empathy and compassion and which thus obscure our true human nature.

Why unethical? Because The Numinous Way uncovers, through empathy, the nexion we, as individuals, are to all life, thus making us aware of how all life - sentient and otherwise - is connected and part of that matrix, that Unity, which is the Cosmos, and it is a knowing and appreciation of this connexion which is lost when we impose abstractions upon life, and especially when we judge other beings by a criteria established by some such abstraction. For this knowing and appreciation of our connexion to other life is the beginning of compassion, and a presencing - a manifestation - of our humanity, of our knowing of ourselves in relation to other life, and the Cosmos itself; and, thus, a placing of us, as individuals, in an ethical, and a Cosmic, perspective.

This change of my perspective - this personal change in me - arose, or derived, from several things: from involvement with and belief in, during the past decade, a certain Way of Life, considered by many to be a religion; from thinking deeply about certain ethical questions whose genesis was reflecting upon my thirty years of violent political activism; and from a variety of personal events and experiences, two of which events involved the loss of loved ones, and one of which loss involved the suicide of my fiancée.

However, this change was a slow, often difficult, process, and there was to be, during this decade, a stubborn refusal, by me, to follow - except for short periods - where this change led me; a stubborn refusal to-be, except for short periods, the person I was shown to be, should-be, by and through this alchemical process of inner change. Thus was there a stubborn clinging to doing what I conceived to be my honourable duty, and it is only in the last month that I have finally and to my own satisfaction resolved, in an ethical way, the dilemma of such a duty, thus ending my association with a particular Way of Life, which Way many consider a religion.

During this decade of inner reflexion, of great outward change - of lifestyle, occupation, belief, place of dwelling - there was a quite slow rediscovery of the individual I had been before my fanatical pursuit of a political cause became the priority of my life: the person behind the various rôles played or assumed,

over more than three decades, for the purpose of attaining particular outer goals deriving from some abstraction, some ideal, or some other impersonal thing. That is, I gradually, over the past decade, ceased believing in a certain principle which I had formerly accepted; which principle I had placed before my own personal feelings; which principle I had used, quite deliberately, to change myself; and which principle I had stubbornly adhered to for almost four decades, believing that it was my honourable duty to do so.

This principle was that in order to attain one's "ideal world", certain sacrifices had to be made "for the greater good". In accord with this principle, I considered I had certain duties, and accordingly sacrificed not only my own, personal, happiness, but also that of others, including that of four women who loved me; and it is perhaps fair to conclude that it was this principle which made me seem to others to be, for three decades, a political fanatic, and - for many years after that - a kind of religious zealot. Indeed, it is probably even fairer to conclude that I was indeed such a fanatic and such a zealot, for, in the pursuit of some abstraction, some ideal, some notion of duty, some dogma, I deliberately controlled my own nature, a nature evident - over the decades - in my poetry; in my wanderings as a vagabond; in my initial enthusiasm as a Christian monk; in the tears cried upon hearing some sublime piece of music; in my love of Nature, and of women. That is, there were always times in my life when I reverted back to being the person I felt, I knew, I was; always times when I stopped, for a few months, or a year or maybe longer, interfering in the world; when I ceased to place a perceived duty before myself, and when I thus interacted with others, with the world, only in a direct, personal, empathic way *sans* some ideal, some dogma.

Now, I have finally come to understand that this principle of idealism, the guiding principle of most of my adult life, is unethical, and therefore fundamentally wrong and inhuman. That is, it is a manufactured abstraction; a great cause of suffering, and that nothing - no idealism, no cause, no ideal, no dogma, no perceived duty - is worth or justifies the suffering of any living-being, sentient or otherwise. That it is empathy, compassion and a personal love which are human, the essence of our humanity: not some abstract notion of duty; not some idealism. That it is the impersonal interference in the affairs of others - based on some cause, some belief, some dogma, some perceived duty, some ideology, some creed, some ideal, some manufactured abstraction - which causes and greatly contributes to suffering, and which moves us far away from empathy and compassion and thus diverts us from our humanity and from changing ourselves, in a quiet way, into a more evolved, a more empathic and more compassionate, human being.

Thus, in many ways, The Numinous Way - as now developed, and as explicated by me in the past month [\(1\)](#) - represents my true nature: the hard, difficult, re-discovery of what I had controlled, and lost; and, perhaps more importantly, an evolution of that personal nature as a result of my diverse experiences, my learning from my mistakes, and my empathic awareness of the suffering I have caused to others.

Hence, I have been, for many decades, wrong; misguided. Or, rather, I misguided myself, allowing idealism and a perceived duty to triumph over, to veil, my humanity. My good intentions were no excuse, even though, for nearly four decades, I made them an excuse, as idealists always do. For, during

all the decades of my various involvements - of my arrogant interference based on some abstraction - I sincerely believed I was doing what was "right", or "honourable", and that such suffering as I caused, or aided, or incited, was "necessary" for some ideal to be born in some "future".

But now my inescapable reality is that of a personal empathy, a personal compassion, a simple, quiet, letting-be; a knowing that such answers as I have, now, are just my answers, and that I have no duty other than to be human, to gently strive to be a better human being through reforming myself by quietly cultivating empathy and compassion. Of course, I do not expect to be understood, and probably will continue to be judged, by others, according to some, or all, of my former beliefs, involvements.

So I rest - tired, awake, exhausted, from days of work,  
Worry, Dreams, and Thought  
Resting while the hot Sun flows  
And the fastly flowing nebulae of clouds, wind-spaked,  
Grow tendrils to shape themselves with faces  
Here:  
One planet gasping as it gasps  
Since the slaying by Homo Hubris never ever seems  
To stop.

Too late the empathy to set us flowing  
Back to love?  
So much promise for so long undesired  
I am left sad, warm, sleepy  
While the Summer Sun brings peace enough  
To sleep-me  
As the circling Buzzard  
Cries.

*So There Is Warm Sun*

DW Myatt  
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(1) See my revised essays collected under the title *The Numinous Way of Life: Empathy, Compassion and Honour*.

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## One Exquisite Silence

These are the moments of an exquisite silence  
As we lie together on your sofa, holding, pressing  
Our bodies together  
As I, gently, stroke your face and hair  
And you kiss each finger of my hand.

There is a fire of logs to warm us,  
As night descends:

There are no words to confuse,  
No time, as we flow, together,  
As clouds on a warm Summer's day  
Beneath a dome of blue.

There is a peace, here, which fills us  
As if we are the world and all the beautiful, peaceful, things  
Of the world.

Nearby, your two ginger cats sleep  
Secure in the warmth of their world  
As we are secured while we lie,  
Wordless, feeling those subtle energies  
Born from no barriers:  
You are me as I am you,  
In such exquisite moments.

But you belong to another  
And it is against my will, my dreams, desires  
That I leave  
To walk the lonely miles under moonlight  
To where a dreary lamp lights my empty room.

DW Myatt

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## Such A Poem As This

There is work - the overtime - long walks under Sun, stars  
To keep me distracted  
For there is then no hours-long dwelling on your absence:  
But this music undid such willful cunning plans:

You were there, then, as that Lute sounded,  
Here, so real in memory, I touched our dream:  
Warm, sensuous, as when that day I held your hand, felt your body  
And empathy, sorrow, memory, made you cry.  
I loved you then in that moment with a strength which surprised me  
And had to fight to keep  
That truth, my tears, from bursting forth:  
Such love a torrent sweeping my calm of years  
Away.

This week will become the month of loss,  
This month a toil endured  
As when the weary soil, drought-kept,  
Waits, waiting, to bring forth flowering joy from seeds,  
Like memory, sown from tears that are earth's rain,  
My pain.

I know - and because I know the you  
The years of sadness, doubt, self-loathing, hid and hides away,  
I love the love that has no words I know:  
Such love that is only the touch of you, the smile of you, the need of you, the scent of you,  
The longing to be with you as if my love might redeem  
The sorrows which made you hide  
Still hiding a hope, within.

So much to say before you travel to stay a month away  
With he who is your choice:  
So much to miss I am, will be, lost  
Needing now to run the miles to your house  
Bearing such a poem as this.  
This is all I have -



No house, car, money, prospects.  
Only a love, a dream  
Seen when I kissed your tears before you rested your head  
On my shoulder that one night of belonging  
When we knew, felt, touched, remembered, the essence.

But - three decades of love, thwarted - I am no longer naive enough to believe  
You will be mine  
And so I shall not, cannot, will not - must not - call upon you bearing  
Such a poem as this.

DW Myatt

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## Questions About Race, The Folk, and The Numinous Way

*Q: Is it correct that The Numinous Way now rejects as unethical the concept of even "the folk"?*

A: Yes. Both the concept of race - and that of the folk - are regarded as un-numinous and unethical. They are examples of abstractions, which abstractions - as explained elsewhere (for instance in *The Immorality of Abstraction*) - obscure, or undermine, empathy; and it is empathy which is the fundamental ethical basis of The Numinous Way itself.

As mentioned in *An Overview of The Numinous Way*:

"Empathy leads us away from the artificial, lifeless and thus un-numinous abstractions we have constructed and manufactured and which we impose, or project, upon other human beings, upon other life, and upon ourselves, often in an attempt to "understand" such beings and ourselves. And it is abstractions which are or which can be the genesis of prejudice, intolerance, and inhumanity. In addition, abstractions are one of the main causes of suffering: one of the main reasons we human beings have caused or contributed to the suffering of other human beings..."

Race, the concept of the folk - and all that derives from such things (such as racism, racialism, racial prejudice, and nationalism) - have no place in The Numinous Way. Such things - such abstractions - are the genesis of suffering, and thus contradict the very essence of The Numinous Way.

Historically, The Numinous Way was developed over a period of some ten years, and in the early stages of its development was even called The Numinous Way of Folk Culture, and prior to that, just "Folk Culture". There was thus some emphasis in those early days on "the folk" as a living-being, which living, changing, being was taken to be a natural part of Nature and was initially regarded as not the same as the abstract concept of "race". This, however, was an error, based upon not taking the ethic of empathy to its logical, and human, conclusion.

As the development of The Numinous Way continued based on the cosmic ethic deriving from empathy and compassion, the emphasis had to be, ethically, removed from both the concept of the race and that of "the folk" to be upon the individual in relation to values of empathy and compassion, and upon the individual developing such ethical virtues and faculties. This change resulted from the fundamental premise that all human abstractions - all theoretical forms, ideals, and causal constructs - were a move-away from, or detrimental to, empathy and thus a contradiction of not only honour but also of our very humanity. Thus were such human "things" - such human manufactured abstractions - considered to be, at worst, unethical and, at best, detrimental to honour and thus to empathy and compassion, for such "things" either tend toward prejudice, or they are manifestations of prejudice: of that unnecessary and unethical and often irrational and instinctive pre-judgement which we human beings are and have been prone to, but which we can, through empathy, move away from.

Thus, the faculty of empathy - and its cultivation and development via compassion and the ethic of honour - is totally independent of the concept of "the folk", which concept of the folk is not now, and should not be taken or assumed to be, the foundation of, or part of, The Numinous Way itself. Rather, the foundation of The Numinous Way is empathy: empathy with all life, on this planet, and in The Cosmos. Thus, the fundamental aim of The Numinous Way is to place the individual - regardless of what folk or race or culture they are said to belong to, or they might consider themselves to belong to - in the correct context with Life, with Nature, and with The Cosmos. Expressed another way, the aim is for us, *as individuals*, to develop empathy, compassion and reason - and to strive to live in an honourable and compassionate manner - so that we can naturally feel and access and be part of the numinous, and evolve our humanity without causing or contributing to suffering.

Thus, The Numinous way is profoundly a-political, regarding all politics, all ideology, all dogma, as detrimental to empathy and the development of empathy, and as a cause of, or a potential cause of, suffering.

*Q: But isn't there a danger of even this Numinous Way, as you call it, becoming a dogma, developing a theology, and thus causing dissent and strife among its adherents?*

A: Every Way has some potential to become an abstraction, a dogma. What stops them from doing so is the application of their basal ethics. If the ethics of the Numinous Way are lived, applied, it cannot become so. What might become dogmatic or abstract would not by definition therefore be The Numinous Way, but something else. Thus, so long as the ethics are applied, and lived - so long as there is personal empathy as the basis of living - this cannot or should not occur. The Numinous Way does not claim to be divinely-inspired, as it does not set itself up as the authoritative guide to living, or as some perfect representative, as the sole representative, of what is true and right. It does not claim to have some monopoly on understanding. It is just one answer among many answers - to be considered, or not, to be accepted or not, according to the judgement, the empathy, of each individual.

*Q: Are you then saying that the answers of other Ways, of religions such as Christianity, are important and relevant?*

A: I can only repeat what I have said and written before, which is that such ethical answers, all such ethical Ways and religions, have, had, or may have their place in presencing The Numen, or presencing aspects of The Numen: in bringing some people to some understanding of ourselves, of the Cosmos, of Life. In providing some people with an ethical guide to living and so aiding the cessation of suffering and the presencing of what is good.

Yet, The Numinous Way is quite simple - positing a simple ethical cause-and-effect, and not requiring a complicated theology, scriptures, or some deity or God. Thus, for The Numinous Way, there is no *problem of evil*, because there is no supreme, perfect, Being, no abstract moral dichotomy, no sin - only that simple cause-and-effect, that simple understanding of balance, of aiding, or harming, Life; of causing suffering, or ceasing to cause suffering. Of ourselves as being responsible for our actions, our

thoughts, with these actions, these thoughts, affecting others, affecting Life, affecting the Cosmos, in a good (not-suffering), or a bad (causing-suffering) way, with what is good aiding that change, that evolution, which is implicit in Life, with such change, such evolution, being toward empathy, understanding, consciousness.

DW Myatt

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