

AFTERWARD THERE IS ALWAYS SPRING

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After the land is bleak and barren
After the cold crashes on our bones
After the wicked wind whispers
Words of frozen fear
There is always spring.

After the most terrible war
When boys too young to shave go off to fight
And women and children are bombed
After the deprivation, hunger
And scrimping for food
Even then, there is always spring.

After the hurricane rips out levees
And drowns our low-lying land
And lives are uprooted and torn up
There is always spring.

Only the strong survive
The wars, the hurricanes and the cold
Only hope keeps them going
Hope of spring keeps them going

When the ground is hard as granite
The energy in bulbs lies asleep beneath
And rises up like Lazarus
When the warm winds come
The energy is released.
There is always spring. .

**I DROPPED A PENNY IN THE SOUP AND OTHER UNRELATED
ABSURDITIES**

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Life is not linear
Or logical
Or predictable.
Absurd things happen
With no premeditation or meaning.
Yet we are “meaning seeking” animals.

Like I dropped a small penny in my soup
Then I ate the penny-flavored soup.
It tasted good
But I wondered if I would get copper
On the brain, building up plaque
On entangled ganglions.

But I swallowed the hot soup
(Not the penny)
I scooped the penny out
Clean and shiny
Having enjoyed the cleansing experience
As if purified in the River Jordan.

Unlike my minister, I was not re-baptized in the
Cold waters of the Jordan
In a land where water
Is almost as precious as oil
And more holy.

One time my friends poured out
The precious holy water of
Very Religious Fellow at Army Language School.
He substituted tap water
Without this person’s knowledge.
(Or perhaps he only told him he poured it out).
The joke may have been on my friend
Because the Very Religious Fellow
May have been sanctified by his thoughts alone.

I am purified by the pine scent
And open sky in the mountains and
The moon with its moon dogs
And perhaps sacred cats.

Don't Die with Your Song Within You.

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On her desk was a cracked vase
Transformed into a hungry hippopotamus
Awkward in gait with its mouth open wide,
Symbolic of the potential for human salvage.

Every one cannot achieve everything
They set out to achieve.
Not everyone has:
 the same beautiful mind.
 the same athletic legs.
 The same compassion needed for teaching.
 the voice of a meadowlark.
 capacity and vision to help or inspire others.
 the capacity to reassemble a greasy engine.

But how can we know what we can't become
Unless we try to become something?
Unless we try to learn to sing
We may die with our song unsung.

I was only a poet in waiting
With a love for words
Until I put those words into song.

I was only a kid with a knack for drawing
Until I was trained on how to handle a brush
I was only a man with a knife
And love of wood
Until I crafted my first sculpture.
I was only an untried man until I became a father
I only had a vision until I took my first picture.

It is time to write the book or craft the article
That I dreamed of writing
I will not be discouraged until I am rejected 10 times.

I still have songs yet unsung.
I will sing my song.