

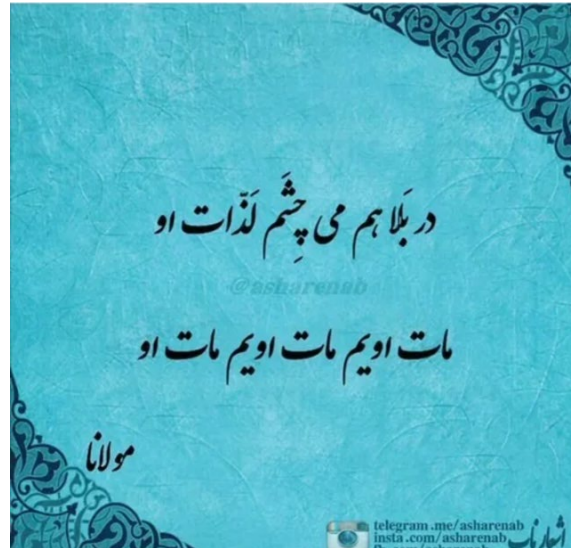
Gurdjieff Foundation of San Diego County

Selected Poetry and Art

April 2024

On a Saturday in April 2024, members of the Gurdjieff Foundation of San Diego County met for a Work day. Their assignment was to bring a favorite poem. In the course of the day, each was instructed to paint four versions of their impression of the poem they brought.

What follows are the poems and the corresponding paintings.



by Mawlana Rumi:

In misery too, I savor joys of him

Mesmerized, mesmerized, mesmerized I am by him



On Self-Knowledge

AND a man said, Speak to us of Self-Knowledge.

And he answered, saying:

Your hearts know in silence the secrets of the days and the nights.

But your ears thirst for the sound of your heart's knowledge.

You would know in words that which you have always known in thought.

You would touch with your fingers the naked body of your dreams.

And it is well you should.

The hidden well-spring of your soul must needs rise and run murmuring to the sea;

And the treasure of your infinite depths would be revealed to your eyes.

But let there be no scales to weigh your unknown treasure;

And seek not the depths of your knowledge with staff or sounding line.

For self is a sea boundless and measureless.

Say not, "I have found the truth," but rather, "I have found a truth."

Say not, "I have found the path of the soul."

Say rather, "I have met the soul walking upon my path."

For the soul walks upon all paths.

The soul walks not upon a line, neither does it grow like a reed.

The soul unfolds itself, like a lotus of countless petals.

Gibran, Kahlil. The Prophet



Self Portrait

It doesn't interest me if there is one God
Or many gods.
I want to know if you belong — or feel abandoned;
If you know despair
Or can see it in others.
I want to know
If you are prepared to live in the world
With its harsh need to change you;
If you can look back with firm eyes
Saying "this is where I stand."
I want to know if you know how to melt
Into that fierce heat of living
Falling toward the center of your longing.
I want to know if you are willing
To live day by day
With the consequence of love
And the bitter unwanted passion
Of your sure defeat.
I have been told
In that fierce embrace
Even the gods
Speak of God.

~ David Whyte ~



Dawn



She swam against a current deep
Lost in murky waters, her soul did weep
Why the tests, again and again?
Had she committed unforgivable sin?

At last the surface, land in sight
She thought, 'not much longer,' before respite
But the tide was strong and the wind did blow
Still many more miles to go

The beach was muddy, sucking at her feet
She fell and pleaded, feeling defeat
'Let me go, I must move on,' but she sank only deeper
The earth enveloping, as if to keep her

Deep in a forest now, feeling safer among the trees
The smell of smoke wafted in on a breeze
Fire crackled and roared and rose to the skies
Flames licked and burned, no one could hear her cries

She alit on an ember, flew through the night
Struggling to reach the morning light
Fighting through woe with all her might
Wishing to be freed from her plight

There can be no Dawn without the night

The sky's aglow, a parade of color
Dim growing brighter, hope is aflutter
The first warm rays caress the ground
The promise of the day is profound

Flowers in the field mirror the sky
Shouting their colors to any passerby
They eat from the earth, drink from the rain
Bask in the love of dawn's sweet refrain

Drawn to the field by all the shouting
She anticipates her first day's outing
Breathing in deeply, sweet fragrance of relief
This day has arrived despite her disbelief

Striding forward with confidence, she's ready to go
The strength borne of trial is what she will know
By water and earth and fire and air
There's nothing more now she can do to prepare

She walks the earth all too aware
Of the trials and tribulations lurking everywhere
But they're not what define her, she's the first to say
It's about making the most out of each day

She sets an example of living life well
Her friends and her children will surely tell
She's the sun in the middle shining her light
As they orbit 'round her, feeling all is just right

There can be no Dawn without the light

Dawn is what's between the night and the light

- Robert J. McMillen

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Miracles

Walt Whitman 1819 – 1892

Why, who makes much of a miracle?
As to me I know of nothing else but miracles,
Whether I walk the streets of Manhattan,
Or dart my sight over the roofs of houses toward the sky,
Or wade with naked feet along the beach just in the edge of the water,
Or stand under trees in the woods,
Or talk by day with any one I love, or sleep in the bed at night with any one I
love,
Or sit at table at dinner with the rest,
Or look at strangers opposite me riding in the car,
Or watch honey-bees busy around the hive of a summer forenoon,
Or animals feeding in the fields,
Or birds, or the wonderfulness of insects in the air,
Or the wonderfulness of the sundown, or of stars shining so quiet and bright,
Or the exquisite delicate thin curve of the new moon in spring;
These with the rest, one and all, are to me miracles,
The whole referring, yet each distinct and in its place.

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with the same,
Every foot of the interior swarms with the same.

To me the sea is a continual miracle,
The fishes that swim—the rocks—the motion of the waves—the
ships with men in them,
What stranger miracles are there?



Peter Pan

J. M. Barrie

you try hard to catch your shadow
but it moves much too fast.
it jumps on the walls and ceilings,
begging you to revisit your past.

nostalgia is a powerful state
and your memories give you flight.
you remember the instructions -
"second star to the right..."

here nothing is lost,
you still have every single friend
and on the morning horizon,
you see your innocence suspend.

but oh, remember now
you have far different dreams
and it's okay for life to not be the same
because we're growing up, it seems.

i hope your life is still an adventure –
one that's wild and grand.
but i think it's time to live it here,
i think it's time to leave Neverland.



Love One Another

Love one another, but make not a bond of love.

Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup, but drink not from one cup.

Give one another of your bread, but eat not from the same loaf.

Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone.

Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.

For only the hand of life can contain your hearts.

And stand together, yet not too near together.

For the pillars of the temple stand apart.

And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

Khalil Gibran

