

While stomping around in the desert

By Glenn Currier

I was stomping around
out in the desert the other day
avoiding the cactus
lost in doubt
wondering if there was a god
who would help me avoid
binging on the delectables
that promise rewards
I think I deserve
and need.

I can step into that desert
at any moment:
two hours after I have prayed
or read Rumi, Rohr, or Thomas Moore,
believed their visions
and felt a smidgen of their ecstasy,
or ten minutes after orgasm
the naked leg of my lover touching me
and I feel sad and lonely.

The doubts
the aloneness
creep up like flood waters at night
eroding months or years
of confidence, and tranquility,
two hundred mornings begun with "Dear God..."

that I thought
were well-rooted in me.

Then at a funeral the other day
the preacher reminded us of the 23rd psalm
and I knew that God was right there in that place
in the mourners
and would deliver us from our grief
or at least hold us as we walked through it.

I remembered what a sage once told us,
my wife and I
as we struggled through a rough time,
that love is a decision.

I must choose belief and acceptance
as surely as I must choose my beloved.

What harm will it do to believe
that goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
that he prepares a table before me in the presence of my enemies?

Next time I stumble into that desert
I hope I can remember
to look for my loves, writers and poets
to encourage, challenge, and inspire me.
I hope I can make my way into their presence,
sit a while

and listen.

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Written 7-31-12*