

What's In The Temple?

by Tom Barrett

In the quiet spaces of my mind a thought lies still, but ready to spring.
It begs me to open the door so it can walk about.
The poets speak in obscure terms pointing madly at the unsayable.
The sages say nothing, but walk ahead patting their thigh calling for us to follow.
The monk sits pen in hand poised to explain the cloud of unknowing.
The seeker seeks, just around the corner from the truth.
If she stands still it will catch up with her.
Pause with us here a while.
Put your ear to the wall of your heart.
Listen for the whisper of knowing there.
Love will touch you if you are very still.

If I say the word God, people run away.
They've been frightened--sat on 'till the spirit cried "uncle."
Now they play hide and seek with somebody they can't name.
They know he's out there looking for them, and they want to be found,
But there is all this stuff in the way.

I can't talk about God and make any sense,
And I can't not talk about God and make any sense.
So we talk about the weather, and we are talking about God.

I miss the old temples where you could hang out with God.
Still, we have pet pounds where you can feel love draped in warm fur,
And sense the whole tragedy of life and death.
You see there the consequences of carelessness,
And you feel there the yapping urgency of life that wants to be lived.
The only things lacking are the frankincense and myrrh.

We don't build many temples anymore.
Maybe we learned that the sacred can't be contained.
Or maybe it can't be sustained inside a building.
Buildings crumble.
It's the spirit that lives on.

If you had a temple in the secret spaces of your heart,
What would you worship there?
What would you bring to sacrifice?
What would be behind the curtain in the holy of holies?

Go there now.