

Clarity

By [Brandon Marlon](#) (November 2023)



The Long Leg, Edward Hopper, 1930

Clarity

The sail bellies out with the wind,
relegating headland to hinder parts;
overhead, geese soar the ether
and glide rising air currents
as the orb spans horizons
with arcs of light, and all is right
in the moment.

You who awaken the dawn
are reminded that, though at times

transient crosscurrents
compel you athwart,
your vise remains tenacious
if tenuous, your specialty
perseverance in misfortune.

Who number among the dreamers
and dare to frustrate fate
through hope unwonted
transfigure the journey
from graveward pilgrimage
to a sojourn of the sovereign
unafraid to flout doubt, knowing
home is wherever one strives to be.

Sancta

Waterfalls pour into pools
slaking lush garden environs;
a gurgling spring
bubbles from the depths
as unlidded sunlight
surmounts the horizon.

Tenting amid intermontane
canyons piques curiosity
concerning the porosity
of columnar basalt and limestone.

Eyes and feet attest to the rigors
and splendors of sparse pastures,
rangelands and croplands,
sylvan hills where trees foliate,
orchards where they bear fruit,

salted deserts for remedy and refuge,
a variegated region by turns
blessedly rainy, accursedly dry,
where there is no such thing
as trackless wilderness.

Latish days subdued by darkness
close with sensuous delights recollected
in the minds of those for whom
wondering engenders wandering.

In These Our Times

Overtaken by events, we stagger and reel,
humbled by our own helplessness,
wondering if spores herald the eschaton,
terrified that fate canceled the future.

Forked by dilemma, lamed by dread,
we are rendered starvelings,
longing for connection,
famished for companionship,
desperate for intimacy.

In such circumstances, each breath is a prayer
that wings its way to heaven,
a plea from the hearts of the kneeling
for supernal compassion,
for angels to plait threads of grace.

Just maybe starvelings will turn nurslings;
perhaps, when at last the dust crusts the earth,
we will be, collectively, astounded to discover
manifested amid death throes
birth pangs inspiring novel hope.

Temple Mount

Footsore pilgrims, ritually purified in Shiloah's pool,
ascend Moriah's steps in droves toward its peak,
crowned by a sanctuary famed far and wide,
to hear firsthand the tantaras of the Levites,
to glimpse their hierarch in his sacred raiment.

While unblemished oblations roast
and sizzle atop the altar of sacrifice,
penitents revisit the verities and virtues
of their faith, bequeathed to them
along the chain of generations,
imbuing them with a deep-seated
yearning to partake of eternity.

Something within them reaches out
toward Someone beyond them.

In the holy tongue they voice
full-throated benisons and orisons
as if their very lives are on the line,
being weighed in the balance,
for indeed they are, and none knows
better than another whether
the divine attribute of mercy
will override that of justice.

At length, once rites and services close,
the people with spirits raw and renewed
revert to their pastures, fields, and gardens,
desirous of a long and good life, hopeful
of a toehold in heaven.

[Table of Contents](#)

Brandon Marlon is a writer from Ottawa, Canada. He received his B.A. in Drama & English from the University of Toronto and his M.A. in English from the University of Victoria. His poetry was awarded the Harry Hoyt Lacey Prize in Poetry (Fall 2015), and his writing has been published in 300+ publications in 32 countries.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)