

Advent Comes to a Cistercian House

By **Bonnie Thurston**

After the thin time
 when the balance
 of light and darkness
 tips toward darkness,
 the wind came up,
 howled like a banshee
 down the little valley
 bringing with it frost.
 Long before dawn
 stretches and yawns
 behind the horizon,
 light snow glowed
 on the slate roof,
 lingered beyond Lauds
 when shy light peers
 in pink pearlescence
 over the dark pillows
 of the eastern hills.
 A few roses bloom bravely
 in the inner cloister.
 But frigid woodwinds
 play icy preludes.
 A whole *corps de ballet*
 of little whirly-gigs
 pirouette from oak trees
 seeking to seed themselves
 before winter's death dance.
 Hope twirls in empty air.
 From empty branches,
 a choir of small
 black and white birds
 rises up, singing.



Bonnie Thurston

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