

Thomas Merton – Guide of the God Game

By **David C. Brydges**

I was an existentialist pilgrim
climbing Seven Storey Mountain.
Saw Nietzsche's tombstone,
and you laughed saying,
"God is not dead yet."

Luminous contemplative
exiled from dark age shadows,
heard our chains rubbing
flesh wanting to be free.

All raids on the ineffable
keep mystery an elusive horizon.
The word is a hidden womb, defying
the naming machine industry.

Twenty-first-century
star of humility burns
through earth's ego junkyard.

A calling, calling forth a call
to behold the whole majesty.
Amidst madness of getting and
spending until the planet is spent.

A soul stamped with passport of purity,
its national flag an open heart.
A thousand journeys across the world
converging into the One who is.

David C. Brydges is an event planner, cultural entrepreneur and literary historian. A League of Canadian Poets member, he serves as Ontario Poetry Society branch manager Cobalt, artistic director of Spring Pulse Poetry Festival and organizer of Ontario's first painting/poetry competition, PoeARTry North.



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Marx smiles, knows you understand
 his essential theory is not a political
 economic central control disaster.
 But a shared freedom of communalism
 such as the monastic model gave.

Spirit compass never blocks pointing east.
 Finds new friend in revered Dalai Lama.
 Understood mystic way not exclusive club
 concocted by western theologians.

Foresaw those heart machine
 “*True Believer*” technocrats,
 calculating to do good.

Season of simplicity, silence
 sanctifies hermit home where
 a curtain less window
 clouds of unknowing see
 fellow eye that is knowing.
 Monastic vows living
 as Trappist out of a trap.
 Found without getting lost,
 a right Alivehood habit clothed
 in solitudes truce and grace.

The world is Las Vegas
 where lost angels dance
 on silver dollar stages.
 Cash registers sing a
 neon dizzyland of pleasures,
 in fool’s gold palaces where
 elevators only descend.
 Satan the great entertainer,
 hits the jackpot here.
 Hucksterism bedamned,
 God’s byproducts are not for sale.

Walking icon saint to be,
 Psalm of songs singer
 to widowed world diseased
 from epidemic of secular sickness.

Merton entered Gethsemani saying,
“*the four walls of my new freedom,*”
Became monk transcending those walls
in monastic asylum of the sane.
Ever-expanding Eros tied your social
conscience to a civilization stressing
at the core.

Chose sainthood early before
official after death canonization.
For this modern designation
not restricted to Catholic faith.
But for Sophia wisdom lovers
“*superabundantly alive.*”

Your first recorded miracle
was to be true to yourself.
Relevantly staying in the game,
I honour your reverent name.