

Heron

By **Antoinette Voûte Roeder**

We see him first
from a distance
blending with rock and sea.
With every turn in the path
he appears again, drawing
our gaze. We simply have
to stop.

It's not that he
befriends us; no,
but we can't keep
our eyes off him.
Tall and solitary,
immensely contemplative,
he slowly stalks the shallow water,
bending a slim and elegant leg,
lifting a foot clad in seaweed
to which he pays no attention at all.

His garment is grey,
a tasseled prayer shawl
whose fringes fly out
with every breeze.
A thin black pony tail
trails down his back,
his buffy-peach bill
the sole spot of color
in his monochromatic dress.

He crooks one leg on take-off
and in a single powerful stroke
becomes heavily airborne,

Antoinette Voûte Roeder is the author of five volumes of poetry, most recently *The Space Between*, available on Amazon. She has a Master of Music degree and has been offering the ministry of spiritual accompaniment since 1991. She recently started a meditation circle in which people sit with her, though they stay in their own homes, for thirty minutes a day, a program to create an oasis of calm and quiet in a world beset by the noise of hatred and lies. She lives in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.



Antoinette Voûte Roeder

great wings spread
and waving.

Our mystical guide,
it occurs to me
might just be Thomas Merton in
disguise, the short and sturdy
monk come back
as a thin, aristocratic bird.

Wouldn't it be just like him?