

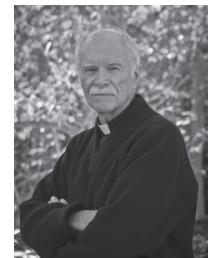
a variance of thoughts on an otherwise day (for Tom and Pat)

By J. T. Ledbetter

do you remember, good Monk,
how the morning's mist offered hope for rain
“the heart feels it” you whispered over the knobs to Br. Pat
trees barely move / flowers dip into themselves
the wild grass parting for the invisible coyote
birds are tentative / spring rabbits have stopped
their ridiculous courting dance in mid-hop – ears twitching

tomorrow the heat may come pushing wet out
drying the grass spoiling the wild roses you prayed there
but tonight a gibbous moon over Gethsemani will watch itself floating
in the embrace of a single flower by your door
while you burn the albums of your mind
because you are tired of shadows sliding under a locked door
and memories of two taking tea outside / fingers touching
as you watched the long grasses combed by night winds
dipping and dancing without meaning / without guilt / erasing and life-giving
before morning giggles its way over the hills ringing doorbells leaving leaflets
proclaiming spring

J. T. Ledbetter is a charter member of the International Thomas Merton Society and Professor Emeritus at California Lutheran University. He has published poetry, fiction and nonfiction, including *Gethsemani Poems* (1994) and other poems and articles on Thomas Merton. His collection *Old and Lost Rivers* (Lost Horse Press, 2012) was the winner of the Idaho Prize for Poetry.



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