

Arthur Henry King

HOT WEATHER IN TUCSON

Glimpsed askance through leaves, the sky
looks lapis and ivory;
confronted, blinds and is blinded by
the sun's incandescence.
Through the thick shadow of a mulberry
a white-wing dove may flute a cool blue call
continuo; and Christ,
white-robed as priest,
direct a blue gaze from the print on the wall.
But, to face the Father's or Jehovah's embodied essence,
must I prepare my own eyes
for longer than I know
and further than surprise
can go?
Have I to arrive beyond surprise or wonder,
simply to accept Sinai, lightning and thunder,
and the intense
presence
of the Gods' incorporate power and light?
Joseph was not surprised: he saw his sight.

In the thin shadow of the tamarisk and
mesquitë, the cicadas draw
a relentless buzz-saw.
I dare not plant my bare sole on the sand.
I have my free agency;
but I can act only on things as they are,
freedom being interpretable as willing obedience
to — rather than mere recognition of — necessity,
like radiance
from the ineluctable path of a star.
Hence, it may be, Their
exceeding light
that I cannot yet bear,
though it has driven out "Chaos and old night."

Meanwhile, the white-wing dove may call
in fluted blue from the mulberry;
seen through the leaves, the sky look ivory
and lapis-lazuli;
and Christ stand in snow and azure on the wall.
I am grateful for the diversity by limitation
— through the sense, the plain sense —
of incarnation;
and hope for deliverance
into a still more gifted body of flesh and bone,
yes, like that of the Father and of the Son.

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