

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sharing a Poem

You *Dialogue* folks have always seemed too smart for me—too rational—too, er, lofty!

When the fall 2007 issue arrived in early September, I began reading it tentatively. After more than twenty years, I had resubscribed, beginning with the summer issue, but which still remains unread. I feared I wouldn't understand much.

So the first article that caught my eye was Mack Patten's personal essay ("Depression and the Brethren of the Priesthood," 40, no. 3 [Fall 2007]: 194–200). It amazed and touched me with its honest, simple eloquence. I felt pressed to contact the author, to hear his voice, to feel his spirit. When I telephoned him, he hadn't yet received his own copy, so he was glad to learn it was in print.

I recited my poem "Night," written during a difficult period in April 1965, to meet him in the state we'd shared. He seems to represent a lot of older LDS men. We exchanged email messages. I hope to hear from him again. Here is my poem, inspired by Howard Salisbury:

Night

The North is silent
Uneasy lull awaits
As darkness gathers

Dry rot unseen
In lofty places
Un-shored structures
Hid by Blackness
Sand and Stone
Appear as one

Who beckons travelers?
Whose voice is clear?
Why are the sounds unsure?

Gusts disturb
This tortured sleep
Words in flooded streams
Still rage!
And Desperation
Strips my soul
Before Abyss—
Or Hope

April 1965

San Diego, California

Eugene Kovalenko

Los Alamos, New Mexico

Obliged to Believe about Noah

The Clayton White-Mark Thomas treatment of the story of Noah's flood was persuasively accomplished ("On Balancing Faith in Mormonism with Traditional Biblical Stories: The Noachian Flood Story," 40, no. 3 [Fall 2007]: 85–110.) I thoroughly enjoyed reading how these authors could present the facts in such a convincing fashion. Their ending in particular was noteworthy: "Without facts from science, religion struggles for direction in its stewardship. Without the values that are the essence of religion, science and economics may become prisons of meaningless and heartless facts. If it is to succeed, the covenant of life articulated in the Noah story must be honest to the fundamental message of the text, guided by the light of science and inspired by the music of religion" (103).

As good as their presentation was, I was nevertheless a little disturbed that