

OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF OUR DESPAIR

by Robert Fitt

The moods of the weather are many and varied. Sometimes the sun shines bright and warm, while, at other times fog lays heavy upon the land, blotting out every boundary and landmark, making each of us alone adventurer—fogbound foreigners in the same strange land that we travel every day. It is of times like this that I would speak—the wonders of a stormy night, subtle beauty of a rain swept land—the exhilaration of a wind-tossed landscape.

Those who are watchful have seen the land garnished by wisps of delicate mist that gift-wraps all that is ugly and leaves beauty in its place, inviting meditation and introspection. On a stormy evening as dusk begins its nightly thrall, Brigadoon can be seen in a broken tangle of bushes—a fairy-kingdom in a garbage dump.

Sometimes deafening thunder shakes one's world, and shards of lightning illuminate the night sky, punishing the landscape with sheets of rain that rattles against the windows—then patters gently on the roof—a cleansing liquid that clears the air and washes away the grimy accumulations of the city.

Sometimes, when leaves are damp and wafts of gentle mist modify the world, one observes a symphony of fragile color enlivening a loved one's face, or the warp and woof of the landscape, as an ensemble of fading leaves plays muted tones of orange, red and yellow against the counterpoint of deeper purples, greys and blues. The delicate violet skeleton of an oak tree plays a plaintive solo against layers of forest greens and violets, and a single daffodil stands bright and brave against the obsidian depths of a sodden shadow crying out the hope of early spring.

Moody weather is a study of contrasts. Delicate and subtle—harsh and stark—in a way that replicates the world. There must be opposition in all things, we are told—happiness and sorrow, health and sickness, pleasure and pain. We see the shadows in the halting walk of the aged, the cry of the distressed, and in the depths of addiction—the senseless tragedies we either bring upon ourselves or that are thrust upon us. Too often we allow these destructive forces to crush the very things we treasure.

And yet the storms of life expose within us a trove of hidden faith and courage that can exalt us if we will allow it. Out of our distress a concerto of blessings akin to the colorful subtlety of moody weather can emerge. . .if we will bear our afflictions well.

For as we do the best we can, and then humbly leave the things we cannot do in the hands of God, He will help us carry our burdens, and will show His love by replacing despair with feelings of peace and hope.