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Solitude



Summer
1980

calligraphy and illustrations by Donna Politi

*Written
with
love
for*

Jane, Mark, and Sue

*In solitude, there is an awakening of the
incomprehensible,
the essential mystery of human existence,
the birth of the inexplicable within ourselves.
From these dimensions of self coming to life
we experience a sense of wonder,
an awareness that casts freshness and light
an expansiveness of self
perceiving vividly and clearly
..... the loneliness of solitude
a peaceful state of being alone
with the ultimate mystery of life -
people, nature, the universe -
the harmony and wholeness of existence.*



Clark E. Moustakas

*It is only with the heart
that one can see rightly;
what is essential is
invisible to the eye.*

*Antoine de Saint Exupéry
The Little Prince*

*I have spent countless hours and ways
trying to make sense of my life.*

The pursuit seems endless.

*I still have no answers
but more and more*

I'm able to accept life as it is.



*On a dreary
November morning
Think of the wildflowers
on a Swiss hillside.*



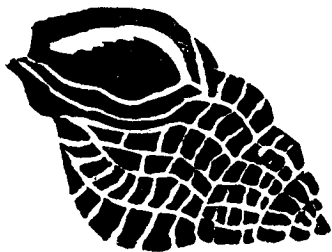
*What incredible pleasure
I derive,
From the gift
of a single flower.*



I turned the tiny shell
over and over again
I studied its intricate form
its patterns and muted colors.
I wondered about the minute organism
it once housed
Wondrous shell ~
so small, yet so complete.



*I learn about my strengths
and weaknesses
when I am alone
and have only Myself
to turn to.*



*I need to learn to let go
of relationships that no longer
have meaning.*

*When I try to hold on
all I feel is the loss and
the emptiness.*



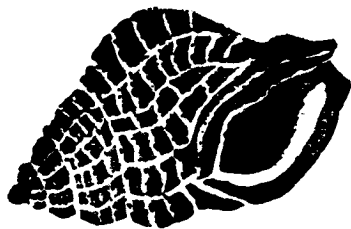
*I notice that to avoid thinking
when I feel troubled,
I keep busy with all kinds of trivia.
When I stop, only then
can I deal with my feelings.*



*I wonder if my fantasy
of running hand in hand with my lover
on a white sandy beach
along the waters edge
will ever come to be?*



*I am experiencing my loneliness
and instead of trying to run from it,
I am allowing it to happen.*



I have a special place on top of the mountain
where I feel at peace.
At the bottom I feel alone
Each time I find myself at the bottom,
I slowly start my climb to the top again.
I guess I have been lucky.
I have always been able to reach it
when I try.



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*What can replace the warmth
and serenity of being in the arms
of someone you love?*



Walking through the woods with my friend,
I discovered the tiniest of wildflowers.

We were enchanted by its beautiful color
and form,

though it was not much larger than
the size of an ant.

*I need to keep my life in balance.
When I shift too far in one direction
I feel off center
I am learning to correct the imbalances.*





*Some days I can wear my wrinkles proudly
as signs of my years of living.
On other days,
they simply make me feel old.*



*I am as beautiful as
you perceive me to be.*



*I do not know what you are thinking.
I am usually wrong when I guess.
That is why I ask.
Sometimes I do not even know
what I am thinking
but my guess is often correct.*

On an empty, lonely day

The caring words of an old lover

Filled the void.



If I could be a tree
I would choose the willow
With its gentle, graceful sway.

It appears so soft and giving
Bendable but unbreakable.

Share your feelings with me
I will share mine with you
I will keep mine locked inside
If you choose silence.





*The choice to spend my days alone
Has taught me things about myself
That I do not find out
When I am busy being too busy.*

*You silly little finches
Frantically eating your life away
Why don't you choose
The peaceful ways of the dove.*



*I am able to give you
your space to be alone
but I would rather be
cuddled up in your arms.*



Do you hear me, my love?
I have something sad to tell you
Our friend died too young
Just a week short of eighteen
His head was clear
His spirits high
But in a moment, the hope and promise
of the future ended
Watch over him
I told them you would.
Do you hear me, my love?



Beautiful, majestic mountain
Awesome and full of splendor
Why did you take the life of the young climber?
Do you hold an answer in your mightiness
That we don't understand
or is there none ~



With long flowing hair
The freedom of a bird
The young man danced
 on the top of the mountain
He fell gracefully alongside the waterfall
Soaring peacefully to his death.





Hold me close to your breast
Let me weep away the sadness
Don't be afraid, my tears will end
I need to feel your strength
I won't take it away from you
My pain is easing
I'm less afraid
I'm glad you could hold me

A young tree

*The beginning of life
Beginnings and endings
Endings and beginnings*

Maybe that is what it is all about ~





*Hold on to the moment
The past is a memory
Tomorrow is a dream
Taste, feel, touch the moment
It is all that is real*

My friend says there is a plan
The more I search for one
The less I find an answer
I knew of none when I was a child
I still do not know
To accept what is ~
Is that what I need to know?



*Sad, sick little bird
Unable to fly and be free like the others
Are you going to struggle to live?
Or will you choose to lie down
and take one last breath?*

When I close my eyes and
let myself move to the music.
I feel beautiful and light.
I can take large, sweeping movements
across the room
Or gently, ever so gently sway in one place.
The music seems to come from within me.
The outside world is shut out.
I feel so private and protected.

Thank you for holding my hand
at the right moment
How did you know that just then
I needed that warm touch?
I was deep into my friend's suffering
as well as my own feelings of loss.

*It is easy to say "live in the moment"
When the moment is full
But when I feel empty and alone
I find myself dreaming of the past
Or imagining the days ahead*





*It helps me to put my thoughts down on paper.
Then I can read about myself as if
I were another person
looking in from the outside.
I often discover surprising things
about myself that way.*

Good morning fat cat!
Again I find you on the balcony
early in the morning.

Do I detect a glance in your eyes
A lick of the whiskers

As you watch my birds feeding themselves?
Are you too lazy to leap forward to catch one?
Or are you merely resting contentedly
in the morning sun?



What is the rush my friend?
No need to increase life's speed
It passes by quickly enough
Slow down ~ smell the flowers
Look at the sky, feel the sun's warmth
Listen to birds, music, the days rhythms
Experience your body ~
Touch someone you love ~
Stop running in circles
Enjoy what you already have



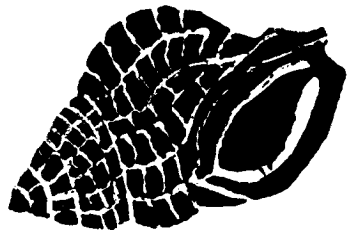


In this time of being alone,
I am finding out about myself.
Some days I feel like an empty shell.
Other days

I am filled with the intense pleasure
of my existence.

I am learning that both extremes are me
Each flows into the other.

Increasingly, I have become aware of how much
I conceal my real feelings.
I can easily show my affection and tenderness
but I tend to hold back my anger,
insecurity, vulnerability, and disappointment.
Perhaps I am afraid you will not like me
if you know who I really am.





*I do not yet know what to do with my freedom
All the years of being responsible
Have set the stage for this time
Why does it seem so sudden, so new?*

*In the end
I do not want to blame others
For the things I did not do
I do not want to hold back
From doing what I feel is right for me
I want to live fully
Have no regrets
Not waste energy being angry.*

*How many different lives
do I have to live through
Before I find an answer?
So far, all I know is how to live
more slowly, carefully, and forgivingly.*



Early morning on the boat
Sun glistens on satin smooth water
Stretch to awaken my body to the day
Prepare the sails
Set forth to the bay
Enjoy the rhythms of the sea
Gentle winds, sudden gusts
Fight the tide
Flow with the tide
Get splashed with sea water
Soak in the sun
Another glorious day of sailing
Unpredictable ~ Renewing

Alone in the early morning
The world around me still sleeps.
I hear no sounds other than the chirping of birds.
There goes the cuckoo clock
telling me it is six o'clock.
I close my eyes and imagine my special beach
with yesterdays footprints
washed away by the night sea.
I can imagine the mountain, the forest,
the waterfall that have brought wonder into my life.
In this solitude,
my spirit is lifted to start a new day.

Some days as I write down my thoughts
to be shared with you

I feel that what I have to say
is not important

Will you laugh at me when you know
how I think and feel?

Or will you be pleased that I have allowed you
to know some of my secrets?





*More and more I am accepting loneliness
as a necessary reality of life*

For me,

*it leads to self-awareness and creativity
and sometimes new ways of viewing my life.*

There have been times when it seemed
there would be no morning
with its promise of a new beginning
I feared, at those times,
that the emptiness of the night
would last forever.



When I was a very young child I had a dream
that I went to my own funeral
in the form of a spirit.

Invisible to all, I was able to listen
to what people were saying about me.

I remember feeling unloved and angry.

Last night, almost fifty years later,

I again dreamt of my own death.

This time

though disturbed by the subject matter of the dream,

I have the sense of peacefulness and acceptance.

.....Maybe I have learned something,

in my search, about my life

Pretty little girl
Why are you smiling
Always trying to please
Are you afraid you will not be loved
If you show that you hurt
That you are frightened
Tell someone how you feel
You will not be left alone.



Thank you for your forbearance
in putting up with my idiosyncrasies.
Perhaps one day
you can thank your children
for trying to understand yours.

