21. Darkness and Light

What do you have to say about Darkness and light?

To Face the Dark

To face the dark,
one does not need a light.
Nor does one need a watch,
a feather, a melody, a sword, a pen.
One doesn’t even need a friend.
To face the dark,
one needs only to face the dark.
There is something easier then
about the facing, when we know
we need no preparation.
Nothing is asked of us except
the willingness to face the dark,
the willingness to pause
in that moment when we
cannot see, cannot know,
cannot float on the sea of habit,
cannot fly on the feathers of routine.
But already, I’ve taken this too far.
It’s so simple, the invitation,
that it’s easy to miss what is asked.
Not a journey. Not even a step.
Just the chance to face the dark,
to meet yourself in that facing—
and to notice what’s being erased
and what’s doing the erasing.

Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer
from her on-line daily poems

Just Delicate Needles—

It’s so delicate, the light.
And there’s so little of it. The dark
is huge.
Just delicate needles, the light,
in an endless night.
And it has such a long way to go
through such desolate space.

So let's be gentle with it.
Cherish it.
So it will come again in the morning.
We hope.

in *The Roads Have Come to an End Now: Selected and Last Poems by Rolf Jacobsen.*
Translated from the Norwegian by Robert Bly, Roger Greenwald & Robert Hedin.

Light

I want to write of the light
but I do not know
whether words can illuminate
the way it hangs
upon branches and bird wings
and broken things
returning beings to beauty.

Can words spin substance
from sunshine and decay?

Can words cajole
celebration from night-weary
birds?

Can words warm surfaces
of stones and sorrows?

Can words reveal richness
in mundane
and battered
things?

I do not know.

But if we would write
a tomorrow
which is wider than wounds
we have worn,
we might wield words
like benedictions
and remember
blessings
within brokenness,
beginnings
within endings,
and beauty
within all things.

Bernadette Miller

Night’s generous
dark offers
light a place
to enter. Dawn
smolders mountain
peaks into view, ignites
desert-grass
golds. Sun
pushes darkness
deeper and deeper
away here, until
the eye’s dark opening
is all that
remains of
darkness. Wandering
through another
day, looking,
looking, I
keep the borderless
generosity of
night alive.

David Hinton
in Desert: Poems