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The gifts of darkness

by Carol Meyer

Eco Catholic

Many people lament and resist the darkness of these winter days, refusing to find anything good about them. But since they are a reality, how much better to put aside our prejudices and find joy in them. Genesis 1 says, "God separated the light from the darkness," and "God looked at everything God had made and found it very good." If God finds the darkness very good, then surely we can too.

My kinship with the dark began in childhood when my brothers and I spent long hours outside at night playing hide-and-go-seek. I recall the thrill of lying in the bushes, one with the shadows, as silent as the night, heart pounding, evading my pursuers. I would run far into the pasture or hide in the grain bins with no thought of fear or danger. The things of earth were my friends, so what lay there beyond my sight caused no alarm. The dark was my ally, the less moon and stars the better.

My cousin Kathy and I sat on top of our dog house at night, sharing our youthful dreams and unburdening our hearts, comforted by and cradled in the soft blackness of the sky pierced by tiny sprinkles of stars. Still today, I go outside often at night "taking walks with eager dogs or sitting on my deck absorbing the beauty of stillness, crisp air, moon simplicity, and the dim glow of barely visible trees and sky. And when I return from an evening event and walk to the house, I always take a moment to really "see" and commune with the night world.

This is a perfect season to enrich our lives and souls by coming to know and appreciate the darkness. The title of Byron Katie's wonderful book, *Loving What Is*, should be our mantra as we go through life. The darkness IS, so let's love it instead of hating it, resisting it, or merely enduring it. Then it will shower its blessings upon us, delighted that someone cares enough to look beyond cultural stereotypes to find its unique beauty. Maybe this poem I wrote inspire you in this quest.

The Dark Embrace

Ah, Darkness, you poor unloved portal to peace,
you humbly, silently let your stepsister Sun
overshadow you.
She is replete with glory, and you,
the repository of every fear fathomed.

Linger here with me,
for I love your mellow company.
I long for your opaque caress to cover me.
Wrap me in your protective arms,
shielding me from searing stimuli and
the wearying watchfulness.

Accompany me to your domain of sacred silence
and magic mystery.
Teach my soul to soar, unhindered by ceaseless care.
Rest with me, share your unspoken wisdom,
learned long before the light.
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