Unfolding Towards Love

Unfolding Towards Love

Martin Willitts Jr.

UNFOLDING TOWARDS LOVE

Copyright © 2019 Martin Willitts Jr. All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations in critical publications or reviews, no part of this book may be reproduced in any manner without prior written permission from the publisher. Write: Permissions, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 199 W. 8th Ave., Suite 3, Eugene, OR 97401.

Resource Publications An Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers 199 W. 8th Ave., Suite 3 Eugene, OR 97401

www.wipfandstock.com

PAPERBACK ISBN: 978-1-5326-9528-5 HARDCOVER ISBN: 978-1-5326-9529-2 EBOOK ISBN: 978-1-5326-9530-8

Manufactured in the U.S.A.

08/13/19

Contents

I. In the Beginning We Tumble into Light | 2 I Never Had to Look Far | 3 When Faith Passes | 4 The Boat | 5 The Census at Bethlehem | 6 Unburdening | 7 Love is Quick | 8 I Keep Trimming the Catalpa Tree Back | 9 Tender Music | 10 Only the Unbearable Silence Travels Here | 11 Psalm: The Horizon Narrowed | 12 This is Where Life Gets Interesting | 13 When We Are in the Moment | 14 Nothing Happening | 15 Walking in Love | 16 Love Pierces | 17 Swan | 18 The Spirit Moving the Silence | 19 The Quiet is Winnowing Us | 20 When We Meet | 21 A Tangle of Blueberry Stars is Breathing | 22 Lead Me | 24 Too Late to Make a Difference | 25 II. April 17 | 28 Where Roads Darken During Daytime | 30 Requiem in Fall | 31 Unbounded | 33

Lamentations for a Natural World | 34

```
In the Fall | 35
Epistle about Love | 36
I Know What the Silence Is Like— | 37
On a Starry Night | 38
This is What Happens When Your Name is Called
   and You Missed Your Turn | 39
Destination | 40
What are You Waiting for? | 41
Love is Never Far from Us | 42
Blake and How He Received Visions | 43
Epistle on Healing | 45
Stations of the Cross | 46
This Is It | 48
During the Darkest Day | 49
Presence | 50
III.
Challenged | 52
Nothing Stays Here Long | 53
How Leaves Form | 55
Listening for the Voice that Seldom Speaks | 56
Sometimes, it is Necessary to Pull Back | 57
What the Soundlessness is Telling Us | 58
When the Heart Stops | 59
What Have We Been Doing? | 60
The Magpie | 61
Silence Has Its Own Language | 62
The Secret | 63
When it Comes to the End | 65
Unity | 66
It is Never Too Late | 67
The Heart Tells an Old Story | 68
Wakening | 69
All the Ingredients are Present | 70
```

```
When I Am with You | 71
I Have Always Known You | 72
Morning Light | 73
Where to Find Love | 74
Sway Back | 75
IV.
I Am Restless with Joy | 78
Hands | 79
Light Breaking Clouds | 80
Endings | 81
Psalm: All of My Life, You Have Stirred Inside Me | 82
Departure | 85
Daybreak | 87
Not Yet | 88
Light and Dark | 89
You Remind Me How the Silence Blends | 90
Finding the Blue Heron | 91
Playing the Pauses | 92
Like a Signal | 93
You Set Me into Fire | 94
The Soul Not Only Talks, It Sings | 95
We Never Love Completely | 96
There is Shining Over There | 97
Acceptance | 99
IV.
I Know Nothing If I Do Not Know Love | 102
Promise | 106
At Eternity's Gate | 107
At the Beginning | 109
The Uncovering | 110
```

What I Learned | 111

```
Is This Where You Expected to Be | 112
There is Nothing Insignificant in God's Eyes | 113
The Complete Stranger | 114
The Story of Our Creation | 115
The Midday Nap | 116
Recovery | 117
Waiting to Be Seen | 118
Entering Into | 119
Where to Find the Hidden | 121
How God Teaches Lessons | 122
```

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge these publications in which the following poems first appeared:

Adelaide Literary Journal: "Love is Never Far from Us"

Atticusbooks.net: "Playing the Pauses"

Autumn Sky Poetry Daily: "April 17"

Bitterzoit Poetry Review: "This is It"

Blue Fifth Review: "The Midday Nap"

Braided Way: "The Boat," "It is Never Too Late"

Broadkill River Review: "Love is Quick"

Dash: "Hands"

Ecotheoearth: "The Quiet is Winnowing Us"

First Literary Review: "The Magpie"

Good Works Press: "Not Yet," "This is Where Life Gets Interesting"

Light: "Too Late to Make a Difference"

MockingHeart Review: "Destination," "Sway Back"

Night Garden Journal: "Sometimes, It Is Necessary to Pull Back"

Plainsong: "Waiting to Be Seen

Plaza Jewish Community Chapel: "When the Heart Stops"

Poems for Ephesian: "Walking in Love"

Poetic Diversity: "Listening for the voice that Seldom Speaks"

Poetry Matters Project (Contest Finalist): "Daybreak,"

Poetrybay: "When It Comes to the End"

Poppy Road Review: "During the Darkest Day," "Nothing Happening," "Only the Unbearable Silence Travels Here"

Postcard Poems and Prose Magazine: "Is This Where You Expected to Be"

Progressive Politics: "Unburdening"

Red Wolf Journal: "At Eternity's Gate," "Departure," "How Leaves Form," "Lamentations for a Natural World," "Nothing Stays Here Long," "Swan," "When Roads Darken During Daytime"

Rhubarb: "There is Shining Over There"

Shelia-Nah-Gig: "Endings"

Sin Fronteras: "Wakening"

The Song is . . . : "Epistle on Healing"

Soul-Lit: "Morning Light," "Psalm: The Horizon Narrowed," "When Faith Passes"

Stone Canoe: "Acceptance"

Stray Branch: "What are You Waiting for?"

Sum Journal: "A Tangle of Blueberry Stars is Breathing"

These Fragile Lilacs: "Silence Has Its Own Language"

Turtle Island Quarterly: "I Keep Trimming the Catalpa Tree Back"

Verse-Virtual: "Light Breaking Clouds"

Wilderness House Literary Review: "This is What Happens When Your Name is Called and You Missed Your Turn"

"The Census at Bethlehem" will appear in a forthcoming anthology about Bruegel and Bosch

"Entering Into" appeared as a mini-chapbook (Origami Poetry Project, 2019)

"Finding the Blue Huron" appeared in the anthology, *Poised* in *Flight* (A Kind of Hurricane Press, 2013)

- "In the Beginning We Tumble into Light," "You Set Me into Fire" appeared in the anthology, *Meditations on Divine Names* (Moonrise Press, 2012)
- "On a Starry Night," appeared in the anthology, *Tranquility* (Kind of Hurricane Press, 2016)
- "Unity," "What the Soundlessness is Telling Us," "When We Are in the Moment," "Where to Find Love," appeared in the chaplet, *When We Are in the Moment* (Origami Poetry Project, 2019)

I.

In the Beginning We Tumble into Light

In the beginning we tumble into Light. We communicate in basic sounds to express our needs. We need light, sleep, and nourishment. Our frailness makes tenderness and care possible. Our imprint of wailing need is constant and dependent. This is never forgotten, yet outgrown. Our small reaching arms and tracking eyes test what sounds evoke and which are ignored. Sound is foreign and learned, mimicked and memorized, cause and effect passed from child to parent, sharing common need. From soundlessness to combining sounds, making engagement, words are both archeology and expansion. Communication is the beginning of misunderstanding. We are embodied in language.

This is why it is so hard to talk with You.
Your words engaged my beginnings.
It should be easy as light and sound.
We should start with endlessly talking,
never running out of things to say or share,
or questioning, fishing for answers in shallow streams.
Let it always be this easy. It is easy
as finding secrets in an acorn among the wordlessness.

Silence is waiting to speak, from the beginning, when all things were said. I am on the ledge of awe.