

“A Prayer at the Edges of Morning”

Julia Watkins
Davidson, North Carolina

We have ridden waves of spectacular promise,
 spreading our cloaks,
 singing your praise,
 shouting for salvation.

We have assimilated along paths that didn't push back,
 denying any acquaintance,
 calling for crucifixion,
 gawking at death.

Mesmerized by progress projected against a backdrop
 of desperate longing and all we might have gained,
 we fell straight in step
 with what we wanted
 the movement to be.

Now it is dark,
 the edges of morning
 barely breaking
 against a horizon
 punctuated by a
 heavy tomb.

Our ears still ringing with the viral din
 of sanctuaries
 as power brokers,
 as social clubs,
 as status symbols,

we seek the stillness
 of a garden before dawn,
 where a woman's voice,
 once barely distinguishable
 in the crowd,
 now echoes alone
 with confusion and grief,
 wonder and hope.

So as the sun begins its westward arc,
 meet us in the cool clearing
 of all we have lost
 and all we fear we will,
and grant us the courage to linger
 with what we cannot fathom,
 no matter how we try,

that when love intercepts us at the graveside
 and looks us straight in the eye,
 we would recognize and remember
 how clear the calling by name,
 how urgent the living anew.