



Crossing-Guard

橫越的護衛

阮大衛寫於2010年8月20日 By David Rounds on August 20, 2010

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*I had a fall and broke my kneecap a few weeks ago,
But thought I'd still try joining the retreat
In honor of Guan Yin, for at least one morning.
Sue drove me to the hall.
I propped my injured leg up on a chair
Out of the path of the assembly
As they circled round and chanted,
"Na Mo Guan Shi Yin Pu Sa" –
Homage to the Bodhisattva Guan Shi Yin!*

*The morning session ended a half hour early.
I set out walking towards the administration building
To call my ride. A walk of some five minutes –
A walk I've made at least ten thousand times –
But not with one leg dragging in a brace,
Not hobbling while I leaned upon a cane.
I became tired out far too soon. Fearing most of all another fall,
I wished that somebody would stop to help,
Bring me a chair to rest on, or fetch me in their car.
People kept breezing by, not seeing me –
Perhaps their minds were focused on the chant.
But as for my mind: its complaining
Had quickly pushed the chant aside and silenced it.*

*I didn't see her till she stood beside me –
One of the tame peahens that runs free
On the temple grounds. Usually
The peahens run in groups, keeping their shy distance,
Unlike their males, who display their gaudy fans
As a challenge to human trespassers who would presume
To venture onto their proprietary sidewalks.
But this peahen, the one beside me, was alone.
I stopped to look at her, and she looked back –
Intelligence was in her eye, and some deep amusement.
It seemed appropriate to say good morning.
Feeling heartened — and idly puzzling
Whether I had seen that bright red-orange band*

幾星期前跌傷膝蓋骨
但認為仍可嘗試參加靜修
最少一個早上 去對觀音表示禮敬
蘇開車送我去大殿
我將傷腿擱到一張椅子上
在大眾經行的路線外
正值他們繞念
「南無觀世音菩薩」——
禮敬觀世音菩薩

早課早了半小時結束
我步向行政大樓
去等載我的車子 一段五分鐘左右的腳程 ——
一段最少走過一萬次的路程 ——
卻沒試過用支架拖著一條腿
倚著拐杖不再蹣跚前進
瞬間已感疲乏了 畏懼再跌一跤
期望有人會停下來幫忙
拿張椅子讓我歇歇 或接我上車
人們不斷地飄過 沒留意我
也許他們的心專注於持誦
至於我的心 由於抱怨
已很快地把持誦丟到一旁而靜默了

直至她站在旁邊，我並沒有見過她 ——
一隻馴良自由走動的雌孔雀
在寺院之地 通常
雌孔雀成群遊走 因怕羞而與人保持距離
不像雄孔雀 總愛展示他們絢麗的羽扇
去挑戰人類冒昧的擅闖
闖進他們私有的行人道
但身旁這雌孔雀 是單獨的
我停下來看她 而她回看我
她眼裏有靈性 並帶著幾分興趣
說早安像是很適當
感到重拾信心 —— 並悠閒地奇怪著

*Around the neck of any other peahen —
I found I could resume my halting walk.
Keeping my slow pace, she walked beside me.
A boy, as he stepped briskly past us, reached into a bag
And scattered some breadcrumbs along the path.
The peahen ran toward them, pecked them up, and then returned
To walk again companionably beside me.*

*We reached the street and entered it,
With her beside me as my crossing-guard.
On the other side, for decades now,
Beneath a Russian olive tree, a bench has been subsiding —
With thanks, I myself subsided slowly onto it.
She stood a few feet away now, on the sidewalk,
And seeing, as it seemed, that I was safe for the moment,
She began her morning grooming, as birds do,
Twisting her neck and burying her head beneath her wing,
Fluffing out her breast, and ruffling out her black and white feathers.
Ten minutes passed this way
In a comfortable silence of friends.*

*Then two young human friends drove up,
And as we talked, the peahen straightened up from her grooming,
Looked at us, walked farther away, stopped,
And then watched us with one eye,
Waiting. Soon Alex, my ride, drove up too.
I started laboriously sliding backwards
Onto the back seat of his car,
Intent on keeping my injured leg straight.
We were halfway home before I realized
That I hadn't said goodbye to the peahen or seen her go.*

*For a few days afterward, I blamed myself
For having taken her so much for granted.
That only later had I thought to be astonished
At her simple gift of walking next to me.
I felt ashamed — I hadn't even thanked her.
But then I remembered the amusement I had noticed
Glinting in the depths of her keen eye. I think
She knew I wouldn't wonder who she was, at least not then,
And she was far beyond a need for thanks.
Not only had she rescued me —
She'd planted in my heart a seed of quiet happiness,
And my accepting it was thanks enough.*

曾否見過那鮮橙紅的圈環
在任何其它雌孔雀的頸上 ——
發現我可重拾這行行停停的腳步
隨著這緩慢的節奏 她走在身邊
一個男孩 他快步越過我們時 伸手到袋子裡
並投了些麵包屑到路上
這雌孔雀跑向它們 啄食 然後回來
再次在旁伴著我走

我們到了街口並踏進去
她在旁邊權充橫越街道的護衛
在另一邊 已數十年了
一棵俄羅斯橄欖樹下 橫著一張長板凳 ——
充滿感激地 我慢慢坐下
她現在站在幾尺外的人行道上
看到我似乎暫時安全
她開始晨間的梳洗 一如其它鳥兒
扭著她的頸把她的頭埋在翼底
抖動她的胸 幌動黑黑白白的羽衣
十分鐘便這樣過去
保持著如朋友間舒服的靜寂

然後兩位年輕的朋友駛至
而在我們談話間 這雌孔雀從梳洗中直起身子
看著我們 再走遠一些 停下來
然後用一隻眼觀察我們
等著 很快亞歷斯 接載的人 亦駛到
我開始吃力地向後滑
進他車子的後座
由於試圖保持傷腿筆直
直到半路才想起
我没有說再見或看著她離去

以後的幾天 怪責自己
把她的好意當作理所當然
到了後來才開始驚奇
她伴著我走的這簡單禮物
感到羞愧 我連多謝她也沒有
隨即想起我留意到她這感興趣的眼神
她敏銳的眼睛深處在閃光 心想
她知道我不會奇怪她是誰 起碼那時不會
而她絕不至於須要這種道謝
她不單救了我
還在我心中種下一棵寂樂的種子
而我的接受已是足夠的感謝了

