

*A Patient
Desire*

NEW POEMS

TIMOTHY NONN



McCAA BOOKS • SANTA ROSA



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Dedication

To my son, Jonathan.

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PREFACE

GOING BLIND LED ME BACK INTO POETRY in a completely new way. I started to pay attention to little things each day, in part, just so I wouldn't fall over on my face. But as I paid attention to ordinary things, I started to discover beauty in unexpected places: an old teapot, a breath, even darkness. Here is a little meditation I wrote on the rain.

Tonight, the rain is coming down hard. While listening to it, I realized my partial blindness wasn't an obstacle to listening to rain. I probably couldn't see the raindrops even if I had 20/20 vision. So I closed my eyes and practiced being completely blind while listening.

The sound of rain immediately became richer and more complex as I listened in darkness. It had a beautiful and immense diversity of voices. And though I couldn't hear every note of every raindrop, I heard many of them. The ones falling on leaves and bushes, on roofs and concrete patios, and on grass and puddles.

Opening my eyes, I knew I would carry this intimate encounter with rain into my complete blindness. It felt like a path leading from one place to another. It was less frightening, even comforting, to know that in darkness from time to time the rain will sing and I will listen.

I began writing four-line poems without punctuation when it became impossible for me to see the punctuation marks on the keyboard. Four-line poems are very easy for me to memorize too. Sometimes I will spend hours on a four-line poem with seven or nine words.

For many people, this would seem like a terrible waste of time. But my poems are the way I meditate. Meditation can occur by sitting quietly, walking or lying down. Focusing on one poem for a long period of time enables me to feel connected to the beauty and love within and around us. Each word becomes critically important.

This method has taught me a deep love of words. To see them as living. When I get a poem right, I can feel it in my whole body. It's an ecstatic experience. So it's no coincidence that many of my poems come out of dance, which I do for several hours every night.

I invite you to spend some time with the poems you connect with. Use them to connect with the

deepest parts of your own experience. Hopefully, they will come alive and you will come alive in unexpected ways.

Timothy Nonn
March 2017

A Patient Desire

when the branches
of a tree
reach into emptiness
and touch light

when the roots
of a tree
reach into darkness
and taste water

when the leaves
of a tree
feel the wind
and together sing

when the bark
of a tree
swells with rain
and turns fragrant

when the trunk
of a tree
draws you closer
into its stillness

there I am
always with you
here between us
a patient desire

Opening

Opening

even a tiny window
opens to the vast sky
and my heart
to the infinitude of love

Opening

what a world
growing beauty
everywhere
for any excuse