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Sarah Rowland Jones

Poems

September 2012

Mindfulness

'Should I not be concerned...?' Jonah 4:11

Beneath the banking aircraft the fabric of the city
unrolls, a bolt of outlandish tartan woven in lights
warp and weft holding some four million souls.

My mind can grasp the abstract number
but the concrete minutiae of so many lives
lie far beyond the fathoming of my heart.

Night Sky

New moon's thin sliver –
the membrane of the night, pierced
by God's fingernail

Interstitial Time

In the small
disjunctions
of the day

as the microwave revolves

while pumping petrol

at the photocopier

the words
slip
through
the gap

and onto the page

Southern Cape

My mother, who has always known that Margaret Thatcher
merely practiced the neutral politics of common sense,
now knows global warming is a lie put about by Them.

Therefore it cannot be that here the sea is rising
its sandy beachhead fanning out across the coastal road
while forward lines of marram-grass drive back the heath.

It is for love of the land that the sea's embrace overreaches,
the sand just wants to blanket the tarmac from this winter cold,
and the deferential heath, brought up to be polite
(of this my mother would approve), makes way for the marram.

Silver

The alchemist, undaunted, turns towards
his furnace, promising not seven-fold
refining, but seventy times seven
– and more, if that is what the ore requires.
Purging and purifying, he labours
skimming off scum, consuming dross until
in the crucible of our lives he looks
on silver, finds a molten mirror that
reflects his fiery likeness. And despite
their tendency to tarnish, he won't let
a coin he mints slip from his grasp for long.
It's too precious to lose. His steadfast love
will search until it gleams within his palm,
his image shining – its clear maker's mark.



Sarah Rowland Jones [LVO OBE] was a British Diplomat for 15 years before ordination in the Church in Wales in 1999. Having moved to South Africa in 2002, she has served as Researcher to successive Archbishops of Cape Town since 2003, and is a Canon of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. Her PhD, 'Doing God in Public', considers Anglican moral reasoning in a pluralist world, and she also writes on ecumenism and spirituality. She is a member of the Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order, and a research associate of the Beyers Naudé Centre for Public Theology at Stellenbosch University.
