



Convocation

— 2022 —

The Great Re-Imagining
by Lilace Mellin Guignard
a poem composed for The BTS Center's Convocation 2022

As you enter positions of trust and power, dream a little before you think. ~Toni Morrison
Perhaps we are very much worth saving. ~Cole Arthur Riley

I want to know how it felt
to be the first knitter to imagine
the loops yarn could make
to cup a heel without a seam.

Each time I work the sock pattern
I cast a spell that transforms
a long, spun strand into
three dimensions of warmth.

And who was the brave
stone whisperer wedging
the keystone above their head
in the first dry-laid arch?

Crazy, right? I mean
there were arched stone vaults
hefted hundreds of years before
power tools or Vermont.

To what risky craftsman can I apprentice myself?

To learn to see in my mind
what has never been seen,
never achieved, and work backwards
so that somehow the missing pieces

fill themselves in without mortar,
without falling on my head.
To learn the physics of imagination,
the equation that reduces fear



to less than constructive curiosity.
We know an object in terror stays immobile.
We know horror films get made
every day because it's so easy

to imagine bad things happening to good planets.

Afterall, the ice sheets come,
the ice sheets go.... But now
we have our finger on the remote
pushing fast forward, as if the ending

has been written, as if pushing these buttons
wasn't actually writing that ending.
Stop. Breathe. Make Believe.
Teach our children this was not ordained.

We must remember we are better than this.

Back when the Great Dreamer
imagined us, there was nothing
to go by. Then there we were,
in all our swimming, crawling, flying,

slithering, climbing, walking glory.
Each a piece of creation, each a fragment
of the Almighty They's fantasy,
roaming the hills, swinging in trees,

willed into free will. Yet now we act
like prisoners of creation, forgetting
the gift, the risk, forgetting we're each
a piece of the greatest imagination.

Could we, do you think, spin back into pure possibility?

Could we dream a little before we think,
make a leap forward trusting physics
to fill the steps in behind us? Maybe
if we believe that even we are worth saving

we can stop unraveling and hook our loop
to the loops around us. It's time to turn
the heel. To hold with our hands in the air above us
the rock we lift from our neighbor's chest,

even as hands we don't know lift the rock from our own.



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