



January 2005

Volume 5, No. 1

Walton, Brad. *How Does the Heart Know Love?* Edina, MN: Beaver's Pond Press

Brad Walton writes poetry (mostly in prose format) that beautifully describes how our experiences and awarenesses through the heart inform and enlighten our lives. The poem that gives this book its title is my favorite.

We embrace love's pain because it is also the true experience of love and the lover. By the time our heart is aware of love's transforming power, it has already been captured by love's essence; it is destined to know its unmistakable thorn. This is love's redemptive cost. To run from or deny it is to deny our hearts the beauty of love itself. We cannot live without love, but the pain of true love is inevitable. We are called to honor and complete that which we have longed for--**love**.

Our fear of the thorns should not keep us from the rose. There is no way around the pain of loving and being loved. I, like the thorn bird, impale myself on the very thing I cannot live without; to live without it, I stop living. How can I look into the mirror and forget the eyes that embrace my soul? How do I run from my own soul and the kiss that it has felt?

Deep territory! No regrets for meeting, for loving and being loved. Love becoming aware of the value and meaning of pain. The pain still present is now redemptive.

What does pain have to do with my healing? It is in the embrace of my pain that I honor the gift of loving. I honor and give purpose to my grief. My healing begins. New meanings take form.

Grief is the journey of honoring all that my love has embraced, of discovering meanings never known or understood until I have walked in such darkness. These are the colors and images of the night never seen during the day. Grief is the supreme affirmation of love's embrace in this mortal heart. The late author M. Scott Peck wrote, "To love much is also to feel much pain."

How does the heart know love? The heart knows love when I am willing to speak and feel, "I love you enough to let myself feel the pain my heart will know in your absence." A heart willing to feel the pain of absence is a heart that still knows and affirms the joy of loving in life and in death.

Love's affirming distinction is felt in the spirit, and its measure is known by the soul. Love's cost is redeemed with its own tears. Love's honor is realized in a heart forever changed. (p. 23-24.)

This book is a lesson in taking lessons from serious medical challenges. Walton had a heart attack – following the death of a friend from cardiac problems and, not long after, of his father from similar problems.

Excellent gift and bedside book for anyone chewing on issues of the heart.

For more information on Brad Walton and the book *How Does the Heart Know Love?* visit www.howdoestheheart.com or e-mail howdoestheheart@yahoo.com. Books are available at Border's, and Bound to Be Read on Grand Avenue, St. Paul. Order them for \$10, which includes mailing costs, by check to Brad Walton, Box 120321, St. Paul, MN 55112, or by credit card by calling 1 (800) 901-3480 or (651) 642-9241.

OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME

by Ric Masten

THE SET UP — I had a bilateral orchiectomy soon after I was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer. Big words that mean my prunes have been pitted. A friend of mine, Glen Ethier, sent me this haiku like poem that smacks of the Buddhist saying "Imagine the sound of one hand clapping"

bilateral orchiectomy
the sound the patient makes
when he learns what it is

That, and being older than dirt has this old geezer doing his best to keep his sense of humor.



Out walking one day
an elderly fellow
was greatly surprised
when from a puddle
beside the road
he heard a toad frog say

"Kiss me
and I'll turn
into a gorgeous blond
with whom you can have
your mad impetuous way".

and scooping up
the flirtatious amphibian
he stuffed it securely
deep into the pocket

of his overcoat

"Hey!"

came a muffled cry

"I said if you kiss me

I'll turn into a gorgeous blond

with whom you can have

your mad impetuous way".

but the old boy

kept on walking down the road

"At my age,"

he said

"I'd rather have a talking toad."

+++

TERMS OF USE

The International Journal of Healing and Caring On Line is distributed electronically. You may choose to print your downloaded copy for relaxed reading. Feel free to forward this to others.

The International Journal of Healing and Caring
P.O. Box 76, Bellmawr, NJ 08099
Phone (609) 714-1885 - Fax (609) 714-3553

Email: center@ijhc.org Web Site: <http://www.ijhc.org>

Copyright 2001 IJHC. All rights reserved.