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A Dark Peace

I do not find peace in light. I often crave the darkness. I yearn for the moments where I can slip into my place of comfort, my place of reckoning. Yet, for most, the darkness is a place of fear, as the apparent nothingness seems too overwhelming and forthcoming. For others, it is like slipping on a pair of high heels. The world seems unstable and the scaffolding that used to provide support, sheds its layers and the upstanding columns begin to break down. But for me, it's a pair of slippers; I feel warmth and compassion. I know I will be okay in the darkness. As my medications lull me to sleep, I begin to feel the breeze that the darkness brings and even the deepest of sleeps ironically awaken me. I feel the cool ocean air on my temples and my lungs fill with air, if only to bring me a sigh of relief. It would be foolish, however, to say that I wished for the times where my medications created this soft world for myself, but then again maybe it isn't. Maybe it is okay that I feel at home in the dark. Maybe this was all meant for some larger than life notion that I am on my way to realizing. Maybe the darkness is what I need.

I've always had a fascination for the night sky. Its iridescent black tinge sprinkled with mini bursts of twinkling light instilled within me a sense of rehabilitation. As I sat on the historical Dartmouth Green with my best friend two summers ago, we swallowed in the stars that seemed so different from the ones at home. As we looked up, I think we both felt closer to one another. Somehow the small lights standing far above us seemed to illuminate things about ourselves and our relationship more than the brightest ones down below ever could. We even thought we saw the Milky Way at one point; we thought we saw it was dancing about the treetops, beckoning us forwards. It turns out it was merely smoke emerging from a distant

rooftop, but we didn't care. It still felt real and alive to us. That moment was before the medication. It was before I truly realized that the dark was my home. It was just before. But it's funny to see how life seemingly puts things in order. Not the order, which resides within music or the order that resides within the pages of *Paradiso*, but rather a kind of order that breeds courage and faith. An order that makes you feel okay inside. It makes you feel like the beauty embedded into the ways in which the universe functions and the beauty embedded in your back pocket is not dependent on anything but *a way* of vision.

I see beauty in the dark.

Sam Keen says that, "God must like empty spaces. He made a lot of nothing that yearns to be filled with something." I am still figuring out whether darkness is something or whether is a thing that gives me something to hold on to, but in reality, I'm not really sure it matters. The darkness is what it is, everything is what it is, but I think the purpose of all of those somethings put together is that they really are not "some things"; they are the-things. They are the things that make us outstretch the corners of our lips a little farther, they are the things that bring us sunshine in the rain, they are the things that give us hope. Darkness is the thing that gives me hope. I know I am safe in its arms and I find solace in its omnipotent presence; however I did not know that at its center was light too.

Beatrice says, "From this, and not from matter rare or dense, derive the differences from light to light; this is the forming principle, producing, conforming with its worth, the dark, the bright" (19). Conforming with its worth; the spots on the moon seem to represent and yet produce their own worthiness by merely having these various patches of light. The spots are worthy because they exist in different forms. The moon is beautiful because it projects itself in ways that produce different ways of vision, one vision seeing lighter spots and another seeing

brighter ones. And maybe this is the exact reason why Dante perceives the moon to be “a brilliant, solid, dense, and stainless cloud” (15). Logically different, the moon is dense, and a cloud is just the opposite, a translucent collection of water vapor and air. Yet maybe these two beings are united as one, for the moon possesses a translucency. It retains a translucent quality in the sense that it permits the coming and going of light in meaningful ratios. But perhaps, the most provoking idea I found was the idea that the light captured in the moon is characterized as dark and as bright. Therefore, the comforting darkness in which I find myself is merely a different, more advanced form of light. It is a mystic light that was presented to me in a mysterious fashion, as I needed to explore the idea that light may exist in the darkest of my days. Therefore, I will cherish my darkness. I will take it as it comes and I will always find peace within it, for I may flourish in the darkness.

Works Cited

Alighieri, Dante, *Paradiso*, trans. by Allen Mandelbaum. Berkeley: U. of California, 1982. Print.