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Prescience

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Prescience

Bob De Smith

"I have told you these things so that you will have peace."

John 16:33

We shudder
At the genetics test,
Hesitate to do the family history,
Recoil from the pre-natal ultra-sound.

We fear the future,
Preferring unknowingness.

So how did you, Lord Christ,
Live in the present
With your future always before you?

I don't mean you knowing your end—
We all know that about you and us—
Just not the details,
Whips, stumbles, bruised metacarpals,
 “and the spurs
That patient merit of th'unworthy takes.”

Did you have a kind of
Rheostat in your brain,
Dimming your prescience
So you could live as you taught,
Considering, say, the lilies.

Were you tempted
To party tricks:
“Think of a number . . .”
Or play out alternative scenarios:
“What if I turned left here?”
Or “I think I’ll heal these eyes in two steps?”

Did you endure perennial *déjà vu*?

Were you plagiarizing yourself
When you spoke the Gospels into being?

But you did what you did,
Knowing and not knowing.
Fully present,
Living the script of God,
Go thou and do likewise.

And we?
The DNA test
Is no destiny, despite
Its inexorability.
But to know—
No, better to be known.