

Silent Retreat

I laid on the bed. The double window was directly in front of me, and the sunlight was spread across the wall to my right. It was a small room, wide enough for a desk, radiator, and suitcase along one side, and the same desk plus a bed along another.

The upper branches of the large oak were only a few yards outside the window. I saw the golden leaves flutter in the wind and catch the sun on their faces. I heard nothing, however; the windows were shut.

As I readied myself for sleep, I finally understood my persistent question: Is this how I choose to live my life, separated from and closed to God's love, while witness to and curator of his works? Will I not risk the divine wind to cast itself upon my skin as well? Will I not chance its sharp winter breeze upon my unfattened flesh?

This love, from a distance, is beautiful. It is more beautiful as one approaches, yet terrible — for the Kingdom of Heaven admits no sin.