

Monastic Prayer at the Edge of the City

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Somebody has to be at home, Lord,
when you come.
Somebody has to be waiting for you
down by the river
before the city.
Somebody has to be
looking out for you
day and night.
For who knows
when you will come?

Lord, someone has to
see you coming
through the trellis
of their house
through the trellis -
through the trellis of your words,
your works,
through the trellis of history,
through the trellis of the events
always now and today
in the world.

Somebody has to keep watch
down below by the bridge,
in order to announce your arrival, Lord,
since you come during the night
like a thief.
Keeping watch is our service.
Keeping watch.
For the world as well.
It is often so careless,
walks around outside
and at night it isn't at home.
Does it remember
that you're coming?
That you are its Lord
and will certainly come?

Somebody has to believe it,
to be at home at midnight,
so as to open the door for you
and to let you in,
wherever you come.
Lord, through the door of my cell
you come into the world
and through my heart
to the people.
What do you think we'd do otherwise?
We remain because we believe.
We are here
to believe and to remain - outside,
on the edge of the city.

And Lord, someone has to endure you,
to bear with you,
without running away.
To endure your absence
without doubting
your coming.
To endure your silence
and yet to sing.
To endure with you
your suffering, your death
and to live of this.
Someone always has to do this
together with everyone else
and for them.

And someone has to sing, Lord,
when you come!
This is our service:
To see you coming and to sing.
Because you are God.
Because you do the great works
that no one does but you.
And because you are glorious
and wonderful,
like no one.

Come, Lord!
Behind our walls
down below by the river
the city is waiting
for you.

Amen.