

Gleaning in the Fields of Light

The Single Ray of Light

By Ken Woodley

A single ray of light
flickers its way through a small, thin crack
in the asphalt sky
where darkness paved over heaven,
a ray of light so small and seemingly insignificant—
like a blade of grass
rising through a fissure
in the city's sidewalk maze—
that the darkness ignores it entirely,
disregards the flickering twinkle
that has come to find us,
to answer our prayer,
here
where we have been walking and stumbling
and rising
and falling
and rising again
through seasons of ourselves
that lost all of their leaves
and then budded all over again,

spiritual springs
following every winter of our soul.
We stand on the tips of our toes.
We jump up and down,
arms upraised,
trying to touch
even the shadows of this single ray of light,
if only for the heartbeat of a moment,
because that would be enough
to reach the other side
of everything that tells us
there is no other side of anything.
Suddenly, the single ray of light
takes this darkness by surprise,
blooming
into a garden of rainbows,
shimmering hues that look like the music of wind chimes,
and then
—somehow, some way—
we blossom, too,
like bouquets pulled from a magician's hat,
astonished
that all of these colors are part of us,
embracing us,

loving us all
as the darkness opens its eyes
too late to pave over the small, thin crack
that has now widened into an eternity
where darkness is only the handful of hours,
and then just the small, thin moment,
right before dawn.