



Margaret J. Wheatley

Listening for my name: Will small be beautiful? © 2003 Margaret J. Wheatley

I expected to learn about grounded, centering strength, but instead was taught to be weightless, barely visible from speed.

Sitting under a tower of redwood, hard wide roots, crown beyond my vision, I caught a whiff of the flower in my hand.
Frail pink rose, wilting and gone blessed my senses with its siren smell.
I buried my nose in this blossom and heard my name: hummingbird.

I know the symbol of this bird:
stillness in motion
drinker of the nectar of life
tiny flyer that makes the impossible journey
emblem of the north, the direction of those who do the work.

I've watched hummingbirds travel high into the air for the sheer joy of speed as they return to earth.
I've watched them land on the ground to battle one another. Over what? a drop of nectar?
I've seen them choose the smallest of flowers to drink from with laser beaks.
I've watched them fall dead on the deck from hitting the window.
I've watched a friend care for more than 70 of them, feeders hanging from her home, never empty, the air filled with intense sound.

It is not great news to be named a hummingbird.
I see endless flight, no rest except in motion.
Yet I do know the nectar of life, the sweetness that nourishes me.
Can I be this whirring, soaring,
small bearer of life, moving beyond expectation,
tiny herald of miraculous Spring?

She goes from beauty to beauty.



ABOUT MARGARET (MEG) WHEATLEY, Ed.D.

Margaret Wheatley writes, speaks, and teaches how we can accomplish our work, sustain our relationships, and willingly step forward to serve in this troubled time. She is co-founder and President emerita of The Berkana Institute, an organizational consultant since 1973, a global citizen since her youth, and a prolific writer. She has authored eight books. Her numerous articles may be downloaded free at her web site: margaretwheatley.com. For more biographical information, see margaretwheatley.com/bio