



Margaret J. Wheatley

Seven Hundred Years To Go

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*The Dalai Lama told a group of my colleagues not to be anxious.
The work we're doing now, he said, will bear fruit in 700 years.*

We awake in a brave new world and we don't
know what we did. For years, images in our
periphery hovered, haunting, compelling us be brave.
We turned to embrace them and they vanished with our effort.
By this pursuit, we bred our own exhaustion.

Hope wedded us to loss. Lost words,
lost colleagues, lost clarity. In loss we
cowered, sometimes together, often alone,
in the dark cave where the future shadowed us,
history at our back, promise
glimmering at the entrance.

And now the future is streaming through the walls,
consuming our faint fires, beckoning us move outside
to this bright geography so obviously real.
Now it is the present calling, not
the future, and we are hovering at the entrance,
blinded by this sudden illumination.

After years of living with immobilized
imagination, this present is perplexing.
Strange now to be sought by a
world we had been seeking, to be greeted by
companions after so much time alone,
to have arrived and now feel lost.

Why is this new world suddenly here?
Was it our great efforting, our
careful, crafted work, our
small acts of cautious daring that
brought us here? Yes.

No. It was changing all the time anyway.

We were faithful dwellers, dreamers.
Through a glass, darkly we
drew images in the dim smoky light.
We saw shimmers on the wall and
claimed them--vague, strange,
ours.

But they were never ours.
The future was drawing *us*.
It was changing all the time, anyway.



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