

Adam's Stranger Panic

By Jeffrey Cooper, CSC

When the image of God within us begins to return to itself, the false self which we inherited from Adam begins to experience the strange panic that Adam felt when, after his sin, he hid in the trees of the garden because he heard the voice of the Lord God . . .

Thomas Merton: *The New Man*

The fig leaf fits snug
and covers little and all at once.
A fragile leaf is a concrete wall,
a simple leaf and yet a lifetime of subtle
yet deep down evasions.

I heard it in the late afternoon
breeze, soft and inviting like
nowhere I've ever been.
Always a new place opening to
new places.

– His Voice –

lifting me out of this petty me
that I'll cling to even as
I wish it dead.

He passes, searching, I build
a prison of leaves and dare not linger.
Fleeing home – my house now
all at unrest.

“I was naked so I'm hiding.”
Hiding behind a desire to be
who I am not.
Strange desire;
a stranger panic.

Behind trees, bushes and a
single leaf, I make a life
unlivable. He, still seeking,
speaks on the breeze a life
unimaginable and yet
Free.



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