

That Which Cannot Be Expressed

For Thomas Merton and James Finley

By **Jo Ann Steger Hoffman**

There is something in the silence
 something silver in the silence
 something raw and pure and precious
 just beyond the flying dark.

There is humming in the silence
 a persistent, light refrain
 reminiscent of the rising
 skyward music of the lark.

There is sadness in the silence
 like a blanket knit of sorrows
 that will never keep the anguish
 of its marrow from your bones.

There's a seeing within silence
 of a distant glowing truth
 that shimmers like a single jewel
 hidden under desert stones.

There is a rising up in stillness
 of a swift uncanny joy
 that can sweep you all unknowing
 to the edge of what you know.

It is luminous, this silence,
 it's an opalescent siren-pearl
 that lures you unresisting
 to the place you cannot go.



Jo Ann Steger Hoffman

Jo Ann Steger Hoffman is a writer, editor, former teacher and communications director whose publications include a children's book and a variety of short fiction and poems in literary journals. She received her graduate degree in American fiction and creative writing from the University of South Carolina. Her 2010 non-fiction book, *Angels Wear Black*, recounts the only technology-executive kidnapping to occur in California's Silicon Valley. A native of Toledo, OH, she and her husband now live in Cary, NC, where she participates in the active Cary Chapter of the International Thomas Merton Society.