

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

*Edited & Introduced by Wesley McNair,
Maine Poet Laureate*

What does a tiny winged insect at the periphery of human awareness have to do with holiness? This questions lies behind today's poem by Betsy Sholl, Maine's former poet laureate.

To The Infinitesimal

By Betsy Sholl

I opened a holy book, hoping to find
the part about turning the other cheek,
and out you flew, hovering dot

smaller than a comma, winged inkling.
Were you late when names were given out,
an afterthought, spittle from a cough

at the end of creation? Feeling you
graze my cheek, I lunged like a clumsy golem,
but you gave me the slip.

How can anything so small have a will,
a want, the wits to flee two clapped hands?
In a time revving for war, with experts

stoking the engines, insisting necessity,
you're a nil, a naught, a nuisance to ignore,
not one of mystery's vexing ellipses...

If your wings whirl, if you buzz at all,
it's below our hearing, little serif
broken off some word in holy writ

to drift among us, inaudible
argument illustrating creation's
fondness for every last tittle and jot.

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