



Songs for the Slow Lane

Hugh O' Donnell

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To live slowly is to catch up with ourselves, to pray in the time frame of a plant, to bless the life in the food on our plate, to hear the story afresh as the hare looks for rematch against his old rival, the tortoise.

To live slowly we don't need to withdraw from the fascinating life around us. In fact, the opposite is true. by taking time to deliberately see, touch, heat, taste, smell, we come into our own presence and realise that every living being speaks of silent presence.

In their quiet way these songs for the slow lane offer us a moment's pause, like a slight interruption made by a passer-by asking for directions. Though they attend to what might be considered marginal or 'small', the ripples of reflection widen on the wonder of the world and the playfulness and wisdom required to live wholesomely here.

So it is that the street mime artist tugs at the sleeve of our inattention; a wild flower peers through the bars of a railing on a city street in greeting; an African child in a European airport dances with delight at her first sight of hailstones while her mother who seeks asylum for them both has her request turned down.

This is a way to take responsibility for the hungry and heartbroken, for our suffocating earth, for the loss of companion species. It is a wake-up call as we sleepwalk through days and nights.



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