

Hushed: Contemplative Details

How we will practice *Lectio Divina* with poetry...

- **Light a candle** (when I can find one): to physically acknowledge and welcome the fire of the Spirit's presence
- **Hum**: I was introduced to humming as embodied practice via a friend's recommendation to the work of [Resmaa Menakem](#). The research shows that humming calms our nerves and enhances our sympathy. I begin with 3 long hums (feel free to join in). Humming settles my body and spirit while slowing the chug of my train of thoughts.
- **Bow**: I bow to symbolize my head dropping into my heart as well as to literally bow before Mystery.
- **A thought before Lectio**: Reading with this level of sacramentality can be a chore if you are not prepared. Or you can tip the cow over in the other direction and believe the holy approach *is* the practice. One must walk the razor's edge to still the heart in preparation for an encounter with the Beloved. Call it Mystery, Ground, God, or Void...but this is all a practice of exchange, of an encounter. Poetry shovels the front step home for me to open the door for an encounter. The mystery of what happens occurs because of disciplined effort and undisciplined grace. The graced encounter is done unto me. One does not make it happen by going through the motions correctly.
- **Lectio / Reading (~5 minutes)**:
 - I begin by reading a poem aloud and then pause to let the poem flow through me.
 - I read it aloud again a second time, noticing any words, phrases, thrusts, or themes that are drawing my attention. Pausing to permeate in the poem again.
 - Typically I read it aloud a third time, absorbing the poem deeper yet..
- **Meditatio / Discursive Meditation (~5 minutes)**: What is this poem saying to me? What word/phrase/thrust/or theme hovered? What surprised me? What am I being asked to notice? How did my body respond? My mind and heart? My spirit and soul? Who does this remind me of and why? How might God/Mystery/Higher Power be speaking to me through it? These are some of the questions of inquiry that startle me to attention in this active engagement with the text. You can see how *meditatio* differs from various forms of meditation. There is a level of effortful engagement in this movement of the practice. This can be done interiorly (that is what I do), in a journal (sometimes I do this), or talking aloud (rarely for me).
- **Oratio / Prayer (~5 minutes)**: What is this poem calling out of me? How does this change my rutted ways of viewing reality? How is this poem asking me to show up in the world? What conversation does this start with the Beloved? You can see how this movement is prayerfully active out of the text and into conversation with God/Mystery/Higher Power. I often find *meditatio* and *oratio* swing back and forth towards one another like a porch swing in a prairie wind. Once that wind settles to stillness, the invitation to the fourth movement opens.



- **Contemplatio / Contemplation (~15 minutes):** This is the passive reception of undisciplined grace. The preparation for the encounter begins with the lighting of the candle, the humming, and the bowing. The saturation takes hold via the movements of *lectio*, *meditatio*, and *oratio*. The ground is prepared and sowed, allowing the slow work of grace to saturate the presence of transformative attention.
- **Reflection:** After the Lo-Fi & Hushed session (and throughout the week), practitioners can return to that week's Substack invite and share any reflections or insights on the practice in the comment section. The purpose is to 1) meaningfully integrate the practice through reflection 2) bear witness to the practice of others through reading their experiences 3) connect across the common bonds of a shared practice.

(Updated 9/25/2023).

