

On misery perches happiness.



The Tao,
Chapter 58

Beneath happiness crouches misery.

This is about the Spring Equinox, baby boomers, fundamental questions of life and death, etc. Just stay tuned because it starts with my sitting in front of the television with a glass of good wine watching a movie about Burma — well, we all have different approaches to spiritual study!

In the midst of a very action filled sequence, an elderly former Bud-

dhist monk says he was taught that the only thing guaranteed in life is suffering and that joys should be treasured because they do not last forever. When we paused the DVD to pass out gingerbread cookies, I picked up the paper and read a column by Susan Swartz, a very good journalist friend of mine who is a voice for the baby boomers. She wrote; *We are becoming die-able... Right now I look at illness and infirmity in the way I approach life in the earthquake country. Most days I don't worry about the earth cracking open, but then there is a surprise jolt, a reminder that oh yes, that could happen here, too. To me, to us.*

I came along well before the baby boom but the questions Susan raises were there and have always been with us, just in different forms. My long-time friend Illa Collin (teacher-activist-public official) came into the world a year after I did, but she ploughed through society's restrictive walls long before I did. She has a reminder on her window sill that says "*Enjoy life. This is not a rehearsal!*"

Which takes us back to the Equinox! Every year is a 4 act improvisational play. There is no rehearsal. There is no re-take. There is only NOW and we do the best we can. We live in the "Eternal Now" as Christian mystics put it centuries ago. Around us nature is changing from the dormant to new life. In our hearts and souls and spiritual traditions we open ourselves to new life. The UN has called this "International Earth Day", those in the Judeo-Christian heritage prepare to celebrate Passover and Easter.

Here at Starcross we go out among the olive trees on the morning

of the Spring Equinox and sing our prayer with the birds. We end with a blessings which includes;

At our feet is the tiny patch of earth which is our home. Here is the path of history and the mystery of life. This is where we stand. This is where we live. This is where we find the face of God in a tiny wildflower.

Brother Toby

Starcross Community, www.starcross.org, community@starcross.org, 707-886-1919