



Lost

We live by shedding. *Robert Frost*

How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. *1 Corinthians 15:36*



Fir Forest 1, Gustav Klimt

Questions for reflection

I ultimately believe in the great contradiction, the great paradox, the great mystery of life: that on one hand I am as a person utterly free, that I may be entirely myself, unique and irreplaceable; and that at the same time I am perfectly secure and led, completely embedded in a sure path.

The labyrinth doesn't ask 'Are you going the right way or the wrong way?'

Gernot Candolini, Labyrinths

You come alive each time

You dare to die -

Let go, move on,

Bid things goodbye. *Wellsprings, Antony de Mello*

What am I to bid goodbye?

The old skin splits

"I'm not lost, but neither do I know where I am going" (Two Halves group meeting)

In her book *A field guide to getting lost* Rebecca Solnit recounts the story of a conquistador Cabeza de Vaca, one of four survivors of the Narváez expedition. Arriving off the south coast of Florida in 1528, 300 soldiers disembark to 'capture' new found land. What results is farce and tragic loss of life as the hostile landscape and native peoples gradually and abrasively wear away at the minds, bodies and numbers of men. De Vaca emerges after 8 years as a wild John the Baptist, an almost naked now altered person. Discovered and unrecognised he goes on to represent the outlook of the natives winning a new dispensation from the Spanish king and court. He himself will never be the same.

"Cabeza de Vaca...had gone about naked, shed his skin like a snake, had lost his greed, his fear, been stripped of almost everything a human being could lose and live, but he had learned several languages, he had become a healer, he had come to admire and identify with the Native nations among whom he lived; he was not who he had been." *Rebecca Solnit*

We live by shedding, so wrote the poet Robert Frost. Jesus put it similarly, to live (fully?) you must die. When Moses approached the burning bush he was asked to remove his shoes for he was on holy ground. This word means 'to shed'.

To shed skin is not comfortable...for snakes and lizards. Most get rather cranky during this time, with some individuals becoming hissy or snappy, objecting to being held or touched. The best thing to do is to respect their ill-feeling as much as possible.' *Wikipedia!*

Reading material

A field guide to getting lost, *Rebecca Solnit*

The New Forest, New and selected poems by *Mary Oliver*

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