

in order to do political work? Should I neglect them in order to practise my art? The love which brings the right answer is an exercise of justice and realism and really looking. The difficulty is to keep the attention fixed upon the real situation and to prevent it from returning surreptitiously to the self with consolations of self-pity, resentment, fantasy and despair. The refusal to attend may even induce a fictitious sense of freedom: I may as well toss a coin. Of course virtue is good habit and dutiful action. But the background condition of such habit and such action, in human beings, is a just mode of vision and a good quality of consciousness. It is a task to come to see the world as it is.

25. Goethe, pp. 104, 105.
 26. cp. S. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*.
 27. Murdoch, p. 85.

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Prayer - for Joan

What do you think J? We've done pretty well, I suppose;
 we've managed this far pretty easily,
 when you consider....

Sarah T.
 with her secret abortion
 out of town

& Mo with her illness
 which everyone refuses to call
 a nervous breakdown

& Marsha whose Mother's
 about to die (the Big C, I think
 but no one will say)

& Jane, whose man
 just up and went
 away

& and Andrea? Allison?
 -something like that-
 your friend who's now
 a whore

& Astrid
 onto her second child
 with a man she doesn't know
 anymore

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Our own little troubles—Cystitis, the body's revenge
 Moralistic Old Bitch that she is—are really quite small
 retribution (for being women).

But worry not, these murmurings,
 these tiny beads of discontent,
 these small hard pellets of rose petals—crushed
 then rolled through anxious finger,
 strung together, knotted in between—
 these countless, counting, counters; sacred sores,
 these shibboleths
 (“Ye will know them by their grievances”)
 are but
 the beads
 of one lone
 woman's
 rosary

and many more
 with follow these,
 through the Decades,
 each ensconced between
 the Paternosters

and the
 Glorias...

Kate Campbell
 England