

Trespassing the labyrinth

Poetry in the [July 10, 2007](#) issue

They will not see me, living out of sight down the hill,
the white-robed army of monks at prayer,
the makers of incense and beds and meals
with the smell of God about them.

They might feel me step into their pilgrimage, balancing
between the jagged and the smooth stones,
paying homage to the rock borders that turn
me closer in, farther out, maddeningly
away from the center.

This is no way to live a life.
How many times have they made these very turns
in their cloister, no labyrinth to guide them
but only the vague inner nudge?

It is the place where tortuous and torturous merge.
I take half an hour; they use half their lives.
And for what? A pile of rocks in the center,
a single life well lived?

The question, maybe, gives us pause.
It does not stop that inexorable pull,
like undertow sent to immolate a swimmer
beneath the waves,

or the ineffable peace that spreads with every step.