

Rest on the flight into Egypt

by [Charles P.R. Tisdale](#) in the [December 29, 2009](#) issue

One day thought's Gethsemane  
Like some personal handicap  
Or guilt, will venerate the image  
Of its last nativity, will fold  
Its wings away and say,  
"The bird of doubt has gone today."

And all the "how could I be  
So stupid" habit of the soul  
Will harden to a pigment  
Like raven's feathers, painted  
And set on an ancient canvas,  
Giving up its foreground  
To a moment's peace in that journey  
Of escape from Bethlehem of birth.

Just as in David's "Rest on the Flight  
Into Egypt," an angel having whispered  
Of slaughter, "You must leave, Joseph,"  
He, knocking walnuts from the tree,  
The donkey munching quietly some hay,  
His son reaching up for grapes,  
A young child's suffering at play,  
Not thinking yet, "I must, they say."

And Mary, seated on a rock,  
After long labor, serene as  
Nazareth, building her pyramid.