

Psalmic

by [Sydney Lea](#) in the [March 25, 2020](#) issue

I wake up to moon and stars still gleaming
in the predawn sky, and think, who cares
about someone else's inscrutable dream?
I'll insist, like everybody,
Mine is different. Listen.

A great white bird—a swan, perhaps,
or egret—hard to tell, so blinding
bright its splendid plumage—stood
in our kitchen citing Scripture.
To think of its words now takes me

back to school days, and to certain subjects
strange to me as springbok or lemur—
physics, chemistry, what have you—
poor teachers prosing on
to my utter bewilderment.

The great bird quoted the Wisdom Psalm:
Quicken me, by thy loving-kindness.
Oh, I've known loving-kindness, all right,
lifelong, from family and friends
and wife. But as I near 80,

I'm still surprised that some aren't quickened
by love, by kindness, by *any* virtue.
The news is blaring as I brush my teeth
of Big Pharma czars who bribed
doctors to prescribe their drugs.

Now thousands have died, with more to come.
You must hate the sin, I've been admonished,
not the sinner. And yet I believe I'd relish

watching those felons hanged.
I'd happily watch their eyes pop.

What am I saying? What must I be?
Did the great bird answer by way of Psalm 8?
*When I consider thy heavens, the work
of thy fingers, the moon and the stars,
which thou hast ordained, then what
is man that thou art mindful of him?*