THE RUBY THROATED HUMMINGBIRD 2

Fear comes at the edge of my dreams,
With images of failed this and forgotten that,
Of being the fool, of letting others down,
Of the mouse that is caught by a big fat cat.

And when my heart’s thumping
And my head’s threatening to burst,
I must look fear in the face
And make it give first.

In times like this when I need a guide
To get me past my foolish fear,
I conjure the ruby humming bird
The one that flies without any gear.

On the Yucatan shore they gather up
Prepared to expend the winter’s fat.
Summoned to act by the north-blowing wind
They cross the Gulf without a map.

No gps here, no satellite help,
Just leaping off across the sea,
The humming wings do beat and beat
To bring them back for me to see

What fear must the buzzing bird face
When it sets out across the water?
For if you fall or miss your mark,
There is no tree in which to loiter.

So when facing the virus day after day
I know I will have to do my best,
So, I think of the mighty ruby-throat
And quickly put my fear to rest.

If this little squirt can do what it does
Then I can certainly do my part.
So I’ll take my lead from the mighty mite
And accept an infusion to my heart.
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At my law office planning the defense
Of the whooper before the 5th Circuit
Court of Appeals in New Orleans.

I can feel the fear
Working the edges of my consciousness,
Looking for my weakness,
Looking for points of vulnerability,
Looking for the points of entry
Into the essence of me.

To fight the fear
I accept that it exists,
That it is real,
Much like the fear
That the tiny hummingbird must feel
As it strikes off to fly
Across the Gulf of Mexico
To complete its migration,
To complete its life.

I smile to myself.
Why do I let fear bother me
When it doesn’t stop my little friend?
It is simply another obstacle
That I must accept and defeat.

And so, I start on my migration
To the banks of the Mississippi
To continue my quest
To protect the Whooping Crane.
Virus Vigil

Poetry by Jim Blackburn

I found him whom my soul loveth: I held fast and would not let him go. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. Song of Songs 6