

Zeitschrift: Der Kreis : eine Monatsschrift = Le Cercle : revue mensuelle
Band: 21 (1953)
Heft: 10

Artikel: The dark night of St. John of the cross
Autor: Tree, Iris
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-570202>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 01.09.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

THE DARK NIGHT OF ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

Translated from the Spanish by Iris Tree

In a dark night I rose
With tremulous love afire
And left my sleeping house.
O blessed wonder, that did so conspire
To lead me forth unseen to my desire.

I was led forth, O wonder!
While all my house lay sleeping,
Disguised, by ladders slender
Down secret pathways creeping
I gave myself into the dark night's keeping.

Into the joyful dark
All silent and unknown
Where there was neither sign nor spark
Save in my heart alone
The fiery flame that shone.

O, brighter than sun's burning
This fiery flame did dart
And pointed to him, ever turning
Toward the long-known of my heart
Who waited for me in a place apart.

O guiding night,
O deep night to discover
Within that darkness dazzling bright
The true, beloved to his lover
So that the one became the other.

Upon my breast of flowering love
He lay in sleep; and all I have
I gave to him, while high above
The winds that through the cedars wave
Leaned down and their sweet odors gave.

Through his hair the high winds streaming
Wakened, and his hand grew tense
Upon my neck, O gentle seeming
Yet falling in its sharp sense
Like pain upon my fainting sense.

And so I lay, forgetting all —
Myself with the beloved linking,
I lost myself — and letting fall
My heavy sorrows all unthinking,
Oblivious among the lilies sinking.

*Ed. by Christopher Isherwood, Harper & Brothers, publ. New York
Page 245*