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A Monk

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David Sapp

A Monk

I shall be a monk,
ambitious Benedict, aspiring
bodhisattva. I will
reckon my days in obsessive
breviary, lauds, vespers,
nocturns, thumbing a rosary,
spinning a prayer wheel.
My feet will tread on cool
stone, dim abbey nave,
or in warm golden stupas.
In the scriptoria,
my pen will scratch at lined,
illuminated parchment,
but I will renounce the noise,

the habitual din,
silence my new scripture.
I will don a saffron robe,
offer my empty bowl
at the supermarket.
Holy beggar? Alms? Well no,
my backyard is my cloister,

a suburban ranch blessed
with every convenience, TV,
washer-dryer, microwave.
I will embrace obscurity,
zealously relish isolation.
Will I dwell upon Jesus,
Buddha, my nebulous course,
or will I simply gaze
upon descending blossoms,
infinite petals, spring?
And look! Now winter,
apples, irrevocably frozen,
still cling to bare limbs,
still red, beguile the deer.