

**Charles Hughes**

**After Easter**

*April 2020*

An infant died in March in Illinois,  
Who'd tested positive for the disease  
Here and now blindly raging.  
*Scheherazade*, the oboe solo, sings  
Lifting me free of my anxieties.  
(We have an infant grandson.)  
Music Appreciation, Monday nights,  
Seven to ten, spring term. An earthy breeze  
Finds barely open windows  
And mingles with strains of *Scheherazade*  
I'm hearing at eighteen, which makes time freeze  
As if I were outside it.  
"All shall be well." Words given to Julian  
I read and read and read, looking for peace  
Hidden within their promise.  
The Resurrection is dissolving time —  
So I would say. Visions and melodies  
Burn through time's fabric, vanish.  
A baby died! Still, sparks of beauty come —  
From God, I'd say. I'd say, no less than these,  
The horror feels immortal.

Charles Hughes

**Two Butterflies for Chris**

*In memory of my sister Christina Ann Hughes,  
a person with Down's syndrome (1969-2020)*

Two sudden butterflies,  
A yellow one, a white,  
Their watercolor wings  
Flailing the breeze — they rise  
And fall in bell-shaped swings,  
Then vanish into bright,  
July, late-morning glare,  
On their way silently,  
Going to God knows where  
But lingering with me —  
Shy glories still intense,  
In flight, bobbing and weaving  
Across my memory,  
Always arriving, leaving,  
Indelible innocence.