

# Statio

by [Kathleen O'Toole](#) in the [December 2, 2008](#) issue

For once, silence—  
genuine calm. Forty minutes  
on a tidal bight with a great blue  
heron                    in the binoculars'  
                                 sight.

                                 Not frozen  
but still.  
                                 In a half hour, she barely turns  
a full 360 degrees.

                                 Time to notice  
the dark wingtip markings,  
light not-blue-but-gray breast feathers,  
the cobalt dash between the long beak  
and dark-eyed crown.

                                 Expectation  
gives way to awe, as each degree  
thins her to a reed among reeds.

By sunset, barely an apostrophe  
against the green marsh  
                                 what's left of color  
bleeding into water,  
this resolve:

                                 to pause  
to practice, to attend.

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*Statio*. One of the elements of Benedictine spiritual discipline, the practice of pausing between activities to become conscious of the moment, of the presence of God.