

# Cantata

by [Hannah VanderHart](#) in the [November 16, 2010](#) issue

*Here in the prison yard there is a thrush which sings  
beautifully in the morning, and now in the evening too.*

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Saws are grinding in the morning sunlight—  
a compact tractor in Paradise's green.

Noise rushes inside the ear's small shell, and out  
again. The bees swim in it. The petals on

the neighbor's tree drop into its vibrant flow  
and are pulled away. The sunlight stays.

I write to you such things because they are  
and because, in a car with a broken radio,

you hear something. Like a mountaintop and like  
the sea, your silent car—but better than each,

less traveling. A marked absence of song.  
Gone the ringing saws, the meanness of mind.

Time for the cantata you would like to sing.