

## Hiking Photo

This is proof you existed  
somewhere at that particular  
point in time. There's the trail,  
running downhill, and the trees  
waking up to late March  
while reaching toward heaven.  
You were alive, at this specific  
moment, even if no one else  
knew or even cared.

This is evidence of your walk  
down this inevitable path.

The poetry and prose of **Robert L. Penick** have appeared in well over 200 different literary journals, including *The Hudson Review*, *North American Review*, *Plainsongs*, and *Oxford Magazine*. *The Art of Mercy: New and Selected Poems* is now available from Hohm Press, and more of his work can be found at [theartofmercy.net](http://theartofmercy.net)