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The Unequal Hours: Moments of Being in the Natural World
Linda Underhill
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> *We cannot see the wind, but we can see its influence. … Wind transports the seeds of dandelions, milkweed, and thistles. It pollinates the wheat used in our bread. It sends spores and even some spiders on their way in the world. Hawks will circle a canyon, lifted by spirals of rising warm air currents, wings outstretched and still, riding the wind, just for fun.*

Linda Underhill has an uncanny talent for leading one deep into the middle of a forest, swamp or rural country side and through her descriptive prowess makes one feel the breeze as it rustles the leaves of an oak, or the ripples of the water. Underhill, who spent most of her life in the city until moving to a rural area, writes with fine detail in her book of essays, which describes elements of the natural world: wind, water, ice, fire, trees.

In her essay "The Unequal Hours" she writes about the history of hours starting with the origin of the word, which comes from the Greek horae, goddesses of great beauty who presided over the cycles of time: the hours, seasons and years. She notes that there is more sun in summer than in winter resulting in summer hours being longer than those in winter hence winter and summer hours were called "the unequal hours." Underhill then intertwines her feelings about the nature of time with concepts of time mentioned in mythology, the Bible and history.

Other essays include "In the Heart of the Wind," "Living with Trees," and "Water Music." In "Baptism by Fire" Underhill discusses the heat of fire symbolizing the passion of spiritual faith noting the flame that burns at the center of the scared heart of Christ.

The Unequal Hours is also a spiritual reminder of the healing value of nature.