

WINTER SOLSTICE POETRY -December 2021

Song to the Pleiades

Look as they rise, rise
over the line where sky meets the earth;
Pleiades!

Lo! They ascending, come to guide us,
Leading us safely, keeping us one;
Pleiades,
Teach us to be, like you, united.

From the Hako, a Pawnee ceremony
trans. by Alice Fletcher

*Note, the Pleiades are a cluster of 7 stars,
most easily seen in winter. Info here*
<https://earthsky.org/favorite-star-patterns/pleiades-star-cluster-enjoys-worldwide-renown>

You, Darkness

You, darkness, that I come from
I love you more than all the fires
that fence in the world,
for the fire makes a circle of light for everyone
and then no one outside learns of you.

But the darkness pulls in everything-
shapes and fires, animals and myself,
how easily it gathers them! -
powers and people-

and it is possible a great presence is moving near me.

I have faith in nights.

Rainer Maria Rilke

Magic Prayer

I arise from rest with movements swift
As the beat of a raven's wings
I arise
To meet the day
Wa-wa.
My face is turned from the dark of night
To gaze at the dawn of day,
Now whitening in the sky.

Iglulik Eskimo

A Memory of Heaven

Ice is talking; water dreaming.
Overhead darkness pinched by starlight.
Below, in the mud of the world, turtle sleeps:
everything fluid, formless without the light
of a lantern. I must remember snow
is enough to see by, and ice will tell us
where we should step. At the end
of the valley limestone swallows water,
moon turns the trees blue, and red
crossbills look for seed among hemlocks.
Beneath the fields, water is talking
in its sleep; ice quiets its dreams.
What I write is always what comes after.

By Todd Davis

I Have News

I have news for you:
The stag bells, winter snows,
Summer has gone
Wind high and cold,
The sun low, short its course
The sea running high.
Deep red the bracken;
Its shape is lost;
The wild goose has raised its accustomed cry,
Cold has seized the birds' wings;
Season of ice, this is my news

--9th C. Irish

Before the beginning

Before the beginning is silence.
Not "dead" silence for nothing yet has lived so as to die.
Not "total" silence for nothing yet is so as to be summed up.
This is the silence of before.
The silence before the beginning.
Then—the beginning.
God speaks and the silence is splintered, cracked, shattered.
God's first creation is sound.
God speaks and out of the womb of that first word, all sound is birthed.
Let there be the ringing hum of galaxies,
let there be osprey alarming and blue jay blustering;
let there be high spirited children's voices tossed into nighttime sky,
let there be nickering, neighing, and clinking metal of bits and bridle,
let there be crunching of gravel, sharp cracking of apple,
and glorious, gulping gales of laughter.
Let there be brawling bellowing thunder roaring down valleys like barrels
rolling down stairs.
And yes, let there be sighing---of pine trees, and of lovers
and of the spirit as she hovers
over all that soon will come to be.

-by Ron Baesler inspired by Psalm 19

To Know The Dark

To go in the dark with a light is to know the light.
To know the dark, go dark. Go without sight,
and find that the dark, too, blooms and sings,
and is traveled by dark feet and dark wings.

by Wendell Berry

Winter Solstice Chant

Vines, leaves, roots of darkness, growing,
now you are uncurled and cover our eyes
with the edge of winter sky
leaning over us in icy stars.
Vines, leaves, roots of darkness, growing,
come with your seasons, your fullness, your end.

By Annie Finch