

December

A white nail pierces  
eleven months of birthdays  
and anniversaries.  
Some dates no longer count.

Its image no surprise,  
diamond smooth snow  
and smiles  
without shadows  
or a hint of night.

Stars are twinkly points  
in drifts and eyes,  
never cold holes in the sky.

The picture pretends  
snow is beauty  
never treachery,  
and holidays are idyll  
never heartbreak.

December's darkness,  
its dread and obligation  
its pockets of chill and sweat  
the disbelief and traffic,  
hides  
behind pageants and presents  
and metallic purple trees.

December's light,  
its melodies and moments  
its whiffs of pine  
its sparks in fireplaces  
and in the eyes of sons,  
forecast  
its glaring finale.

That white nail posts  
the new year to the wall.  
Few dates are marked,  
most are watchful squares.

Its image dark promise,  
northern lights' colorful whips  
slashing through a backdrop  
of bitter black gauze.

Poets know

We wake  
and whisper, "You are loved,"  
in the lonely listening sunrise  
and promising breeze.  
Mary knows.

Edgar sorrows for us  
favors nepenthe knowing  
the ritual's genesis as dolorous separation.  
Love's sublimity resounds  
with melancholic soundlessness.

Edward muses.  
The love of this woman who sings  
and this man who strums all the right strings.  
The music they share speaks of passion so rare.  
One touch and their souls sprouted wings.

Walt sings our world,  
calls from tavern to glen.  
O' golden spring!  
O' roadside bench!  
O' winds and little art!  
Know, know, know that you are loved  
by you, by me, by the rain of this evening  
and the mud of every tomorrow.

Carl sums it thus,  
in sparkling sparkling saffron lines.  
Is it a love you love or a love he loves or a love you both love together?  
He answers himself with an answer he knows with one whiff  
of the sweet spicy scent of us.  
You know and he knows and loving is knowing.  
Love is that whisper of know.

## Scratch

Devil. Homemade. Wound.  
Powerful word of fingernails and flour.  
Hell and aprons.  
Blood and baking soda.  
Old Scratch.  
We met in church,  
in the back of a truck,  
in the woods by the creek.  
Naughty cookies.  
Piercing bushes.  
Dark cobblers.

Dream I have a dream that pink means gum and blue means sky.

I have a dream that an empty toilet paper roll points to who not he,  
and nightmares are kissed away by either not she.

I have a dream that football appalls like cock-fighting,  
and cheerleading offends like porn.

I have a dream that parent needs no prefix or qualifier.

I have a dream that poems are more celebrated than weddings.

I have a dream that custodians drive Fiats and lawyers ride the bus.

I have a dream that parents raise people not soldiers or princesses.

I have a dream that he knows love regardless of address.

I have a dream that words are loved more than diamonds.

I have a dream that Jonathan Swift trumps Taylor.

I have a dream that cats hire dogs as bouncers at their nightclubs.

I have a dream that voluntary ignorance is illegal, and offenders must read Willems,  
White, Whitman, Wilde, and Willa for correction.

I have a dream that humanity is human and mankind is kind.

I have a dream the world wakes up.

## Recipe for beheading

Take the head,  
with a yammering choice brain,  
by its mane.  
Sever the neck with a fisherman's boning knife.  
Admire its cherry handle as you saw.  
Allow the word glut  
to flood  
over the brim  
of the dirty orange cleaning bucket.  
The long faithless lines  
of philosophy will stream  
into the nearby sewer.  
Use what's left  
to chum  
for a barracuda poem  
and let the body dance.