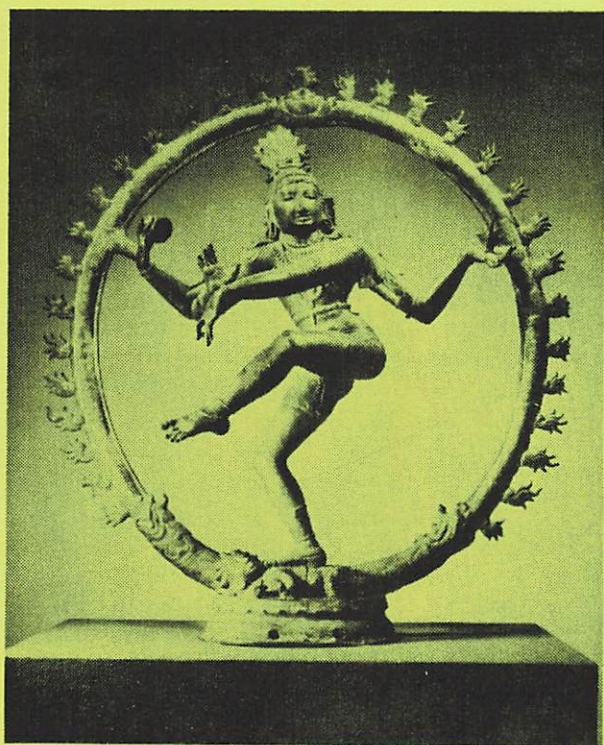


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Country

Seasons, Loves, Tomorrows

Practice Dancing In The Ecstasy



David Dunn

**Seasons,
Loves,
Tomorrows**

Practice Dancing In The Ecstasy

David Dunn

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To Be Your Heart

I am from deep within
And far away,
An awkward guest
Making small talk at a party
Thrown in honor of someone else.
And I,
Remembered in an afterthought,
Included as a gesture of good will
To silence and attention,
Neither wallflower
Nor gadfly,
Something awkward in between,
Watch for an opening
To show you to yourself,
To mirror life,
To light your eyes with you;
To watch and see,
Listen and hear,
To reveal who we are,
To be your heart
Beating in a keen mind
Thinking, wondering, and understanding,
Wanting what you dare not dream.

Seasons

Seasons

Leaves drift gently toward a disconsolate earth
Covered with faded memories
Fallen from branches
Grateful for a change of scenery.
Quiet fertility lies among forgotten hope
Slowly turning into the birth of spring.

Hoarfrost jewels
And queen Anne's lace
Bedeck a moonlit breast of snow
Fallen asleep one silent night,
Exhausted and spent,
Abandoned by a lonely way.

Before the end of ice and night
Sun's rays and blades of life
Conspire in an affair of promise
A premature intrusion
Of warmth and beauty
Ahead of its time.

We gasp for air
Seared by light and life
Suspended between the earth
And blue beyond belief
Overwhelmed by reality's candor
And the crush of color.

A Thousand Truths

Outside lay a midnight full
Of snow-frosted branches
And gentle lights
Almost lost in a haze
Of memory and longing.
I stared across the silent landscape
Searching at such a distance
I almost missed the great descent
Before my weary eyes.
For hours
I sat in wonder
As snow
Crowned posts and boughs,
A coronation
Made marvelous
By quiet
Patience with itself.
The stillness
Told a thousand truths
Lost to blue sky
And daylight clamors.

Only Silence Knows

Silent sentinels of night,
Still and moonlight-frosted
Dressed in snowy white,
Stand without a sound
Beneath a mist-veiled sky
Aglow with crystal light
From an untoward moon
Hung at an unfathomable height
Above the midnight earth,
At rest, at peace
Without a sound
Waiting for a birth
As new as falling snow
And stealthy as a gentle flake
Descending from the out of sight
Into the moment
Only silence knows.

Christmas Poem

Silent nights not so holy.
Holy nights not so silent.
Crowds raucous and out of hand,
Holy purposes forgotten,
Beguiled by toys and ritual charm,
Incarnation does not figure prominently
In conversation.

A pity.
Accumulation is the universe's
Least concern
And pleasantness the sad resort
Of weary souls
Stranded in the search for grace.

Oh quiet night,
Wonder begs for time and space
To weigh in silence
The prospect of holiness
Come in our own flesh,
Not clambering for attention
Or expecting notice,
Just patiently waiting,
Like a good friend
Listening hopefully
To the evening news.

Winter Garden

The ground was very cold and still.
What snow remained
Covered in the deep shade of crevassed rock
Where even mid-day warmth
Could not reach.
The garden lay defeated
In shades of brown and grey
Along paths left to wander silently
Beside drained ponds and leafless trees.
Delicate shrubs stood wrapped in sack cloth
Against the winter blast,
Like so many monks cowed and girded
Against storms of desire or excess.

The garden lay at our feet,
Marking time,
Waiting obedient to the earth leaning
Away from light and life.
The very intermission its own show.
The winter silence beckoned memories and longings
As pleasing as milky fragrance
And engaging as blossoms waltzing in a gentle breeze.

Early Spring

Snow clouds dash across
a spring come lately crystal valley
trying to catch up with winter.
A plume of lucid white
flows off the brilliant height
a weary day-long trek away.
High beyond the green horizon,
above the roaring gust,
cotton puffs of grey and silver
scud west to east tangent to the earth,
paying scant attention
to the niceties of spring.
Suspended high above the planet
heaven is a bowl so blue
everything you see seems true
and there is no place to hide.

The Tiny Leaf

The tiny leaf appeared one day
Light green and bright
On the little tree
Stationed at my side.

I could not take my eyes off
This little friend,
An unexpected presence
Of birth and life.

As I stared in delight,
Tears came to my eyes
As at the birth of a child,
As if to say,
“Welcome to being.”

Late Spring

Grey brown branches
Frosted, white-topped and cold,
Stare bleakly at each other,
Questioning the propriety
Of late spring snow.

Spring Garden

I felt eyes peering up at me
from every square foot of space at my feet.
Even from the shrubs and trees.
Everywhere life peered out from death,
Green mists and hints of birth
Damply rising above the sullen clods
Prodding each other into view
All subtly and prospects.

It was a stealthy affair,
These tiny debuts,
Like the movement of an hour hand
You notice only after the fact.
One day unknown and unexpected
The next arrived unannounced.
I felt startled eyes upon me at every turn
As if I had wandered in on some secret mustering of life.

In Between

One evening the earth turned
and cast a shadow on the hill
where I sat,
The mountains on the left,
The plains on the right.
and in between I waited for the evening,
master of the pines and scrub.

The valley lay silently below,
clouds floated gently above
and in between I listened
to bees whispering among white blossoms
and breezes playing in the boughs.

Care was forgotten,
Destiny beyond the horizon,
and in between I watched
a jet trail glow orange in the fading sun.
Car lights and street lamps
danced like fireflies,
far, far away.

The Business of Shade

We sat at ease under the great tree,
Leaning against its massive trunk,
Listening to life rising from the roots
To branches silhouetted against the sky.
Even at mid-day,
It was shady and cool,
Without glare and bother,
A felicitous place to visit.

The whole village gathered there,
Sometimes leaving offerings,
Believing it a holy and auspicious place.
It was a space envisioned by the ancestors
But enjoyed fully only in our time,
For it is we who have inherited the dream,
The wonderful shade seen only in the hopes
Of those who planted the first seed.

In the presence of this great living thing,
No one asks if the petal which falls
Is a part of the tree,
Or the root essential
To the business of shade.

Loves

Study

I stood before the statue,
Quietly contemplating
As the artist perhaps prayed
Before the block
Which was the parent of this beauty.

Does the composer
Lower his eyes
Before lines
Not yet filled with notes,
Or does the weaver
Gently touch the warp
Trying to sense
The weft which will bring it life?

And do you study me,
Picturing the wonder I can be?

The Marvel That Is We

Last night you lay
Tired and lost,
Turned old and grey inside
By weariness and me,
Unable to hold your own
Against the facts of life.

Tomorrow you will be light again,
Green and spring-like,
Moist and growing tall
Rampaging up and over
Everything set in the way,
Like weeds and wonders
Keen to triumph after all.

Now, before my searching eyes
You reach out long and lovely;
Hills and valleys
Full of mists and forests;
Seas and shores
Awash with life and longing.

You are my hold on light and life,
My link to earth and sky;
My way of slipping past
The warriors of ill and loathing,
Lest I slip into the limits
Of my own self,
And miss the marvel
That is we.

Afterwards

Afterwards,
Speechless overwhelming peace
Arises within me.
Time disintegrates
In a quiet eternity
Without space
Apart from my own vastness
Floating calmly in the bliss of we.

Embrace

I watched weary and afraid
Nervously avoiding smiles and glances.
But recalling how we came together,
Your words were like drops of rain on a thirsty garden,
Your touch all misty sunlight warm.
Pain and joy embraced like reunited lovers,
Healing fears we'd too long borne.

Mist and Irony

You lay in silence,
Spent and still,
Breathing deeply,
Eyes peacefully closed and face at rest
For the first time all week.
Passion and ecstasy
Caressed the hurt away.

Looking on,
Unable to approach the absence
Lying before me,
The bridge we built
Had turned to mist
And irony,
Barely visible
At the bottom of the chasm
Left their between us.

Caught on my way
To the other side
When the bridge collapsed,
I clawed my way
Back to the position
Held before the fall,

Wondering and cursing
All the way.

Sometimes the end of passion
Seems not blissful union
So much as
Solitude and pain.

Silence

Silence is so dark and vast,
So womb-like and full,
So laden and becoming,
So hard to restrain.

Silence is so terrible,
So fascinating,
So beckoning,
So hard to resist.

Silence is so clear,
So open,
So gracious,
So hard to ignore.

Silence is so real,
So tangible,
So momentous,
So hard to deny.

Silence is so silent and alive.

Luna

Quite alone one night
And longing for company,
I watched the moon
Rise at a discrete distance
Silent and slightly hidden
Indistinct behind a gentle veil of cloud.

She was the more mysterious
For the lateness of the hour,
And more becoming
For the shyness of her glance.

Approximation

Life proceeds by little victories,
Each approximation urging on the next.
We hope for grand and glorious flight
And settle for momentary escapes from gravity and rest.

We hope for gentle time and solitude
And settle for jagged, off-hand moments
Snatched from harried schedules.

We hope for constant ecstasy and love
And settle for companionship and care
Extracted from the complexity of life.

Gradually the burdens of hope decrease
The weight of realities arise,
The scale tips slightly toward the happiness of peace,
Of quiet thoughts and gentle eyes.

Moon Journeys

From beyond the rolling plain,
The watchman of the dark
Appears above the horizon,
His great light face,
An immense and ruddy fullness
Casting knowing glances
Across the evening earth.

He climbs into the high aloft,
Peering far across the heavens
Riding on the evening tide,
Stately as a great ship sails
Across the star lit ocean of the night.

The watchman sends
His silver light,
Saving solitude
From lonely darkness,
Then descends at last
From his mid-course height,
Turning the helm,
From the sailing world above,
To the unseen realm below.

I do not know
And perhaps can not,
The exertions that drain his life,
This guardian of the night,
Whose rising and falling
Is accomplished quietly
While others sleep.
But that I sleep in peace
While the moon journeys,
I know is so.

Tomorrows

Fulfillment

Oh to be
Happily seeded
And pregnant
With a belly full
Of laughter.

Hope

Visions dreamed
In the midday heat
Of a thousand yesterdays
Covered the exhausted earth
Like twilight dew.

We watched them
Slip silently away,
Disappearing at last
In the half lit memory
Of a retiring moon.

Now they rise again,
Shimmering in the wandering mist
Above the looking glass pond
Of morning.

Bright Morning

This morning is so light,
So full of tears and sight,
All frailty and fight,

So tall-feeling,
Long-time seeing and fine.
It is a mighty time,
Deep-seeing,
Far-reaching,
Spine-tingling,
Corn-popping,
Show-stopping,
Knuckle-cracking,
Toe-tapping,
Bright.

Floe

How could we have known
Our time would break free
Of all the past,
Calved and released
From the agony
Of inching toward
Oblivion and death?

Cut adrift,
Cast upon an ocean
Yet more vast
Than our fondest dreams
Or most terrifying nightmares,
Set afloat upon eternity
Suspended in the predicament
Of an endless horizon,
Blinded by unobstructed vision.
We have never before
Been so carried forth,
So intoxicated and terrified,
On such a floe of time and chance.

Facades

Wondering what lies ahead,
We have too long
Covered in fear
Dreading the unknown
On the other side.
Now the deepest longing
Compels us to look beyond.
Appearances no longer
Dissuade us
From seeking the truth
Beyond facades.

Suddenly,
Facades torment us,
Compel us,
Call us,
Demand we
Look within
And see
What has been hidden,
Shut away,
Kept from our eyes and minds.
Facades no longer deceive,
No longer seduce and terrify,
For we have stepped through,
Crossed the threshold
Into the reality behind
Facades.

Facades no longer give life.
Only reality.
Only reality.
Only reality.

Opening

With the way stretched
So ambiguously before us,
Our life is spent
Wandering the corridors of the heart,
Wondering if there is a way through.
Every turn leads on to another
And still there is no end in sight.
Anxious and afraid,
We try not to lose our nerve,
Running out of courage
To continue searching.

Suddenly there is a small spot in the distance,
A change in appearances,
Something unlike a turn,
Still indistinct and uncertain.

A window?
A door?
Escape?

Slowly,
Like a flawed and painful birth,
The unknown comes more clearly into view.
Neither window nor door,
Neither escape nor opportunity.
On this side,
Fear and fascination.
On the other,
A new world.
And in between,
Only, but incredibly,
An opening.

Rubric

Watching for the red
Listening for the scream
Running from the light
Hiding from the beam
Yearning for the might
Drowning in the stream
Blasted free of fright
Hoping for a dream.

Faster, faster now
Careening meaning now
Flowing knowing how
Going sowing
Toing frowing
Lasting blasting
Casting fasting
Fearing nearing
Seeing fleeing
Astonishing admonishing
Unrehearsable irreversible
Blundering wondering
Pondering wandering
Beeline streamline
Land mine gold mine
On-line on time
Bottomless infinity
Endless opportunity
Merciless revelation
Pitiless invitation
Shocking levitation,
Praying for the other side,
If only we could make
The other side.
The other side.
The other side.

All we need to know is how.
All we need to know is how.
All we need to know is how.
We are only waiting for the how,
Waiting only for the how.

[**Floe, Facades, and Rubric** were inspired by Phillip Glass' compositions by the same name from the album **GLASSWORKS**]

Wishing Not To Miss The Train

We stand on a long platform
Waiting for the train to arrive,
Gripping bags tightly in our hands.

The moon rises and sets.
The sun rises and sets.
And we wait, bags in hand,
Expectantly waiting,
Wishing not to miss the train.
Trainmen come and go;
A policeman and some passers by.
And we stand,
Longing and waiting,
Bags in hand,
Afraid to miss the train.

After all these years,
Why do we stand
Sadly frozen to the platform?
When the train finally arrives,
We are left waiting,
Weeping as our dreams disappear
Down the track into the distance.

Fire and Ice

From deep with our lives
Flows an artesian well
Of wonder and remorse;
Gratuitous refreshment and regret.
Burning and freezing,
Contend in every moment,
Searing and numbing
Deep behind the eyes.

The greatest test
Is drinking the pain
Of letting go
As a cup of hope.
The greatest hope,
Is the dance of the flame
In the chill of death;
Looking and seeing promise
In passing away.

Metamorphosis

Leaping over memories
 Tripped by yesterday's hesitation,
 Searching for a sometime destination,
We create ourselves,
 Hesitant and anxious,
Delicately fashioning
 A maybe soon
 From weary dreams.

Chipping

Surrounded by plenty and want,
The aura of promise
The pallor of decay,
We find ourselves
Suddenly wide-eyed,
With chisel and mallet in our hands.
Hidden inside our lives
Is a trembling intention
Praying for release
From the excess
Which is its prison.

Like Michelangelos
Before crude blocks of marble,
We stand before ourselves
Trying to perceive
The essence of our future
Impatiently calling from within.

Dance and Fly

Fly all day;
Dance all night.
Altitude and motion
Improve sight.
People who see
Tomorrow now,
Show builders of
The new world how!

Damned If You Do; Damned If You Don't

You're damned if you do
You're damned if you don't.
You die if you will,
You die if you won't.
No matter which way
You see yourself going
You just can not say
With unambiguous knowing
That one course is dark
While another is light
That one way is wrong
And the other is right.

The one final word
The truth about life
Indecision is heard
And guarantees strife.

The life that you get
Is the life you conceive;
The life that you give
Is the life you receive.
The moment you die
Is the moment you live.
The moment you try
The universe gives.

Clarity

Proclivities, propensities,
Opacities, and densities,
Can not impede the larger view,
Nor seeing clearly
What to do.

Dreams

Dreams and dreams of dreams
Rise up from the mists of consciousness
Before dawn each morning.
When you try to catch them,
They evaporate in the light of day.

Lost and Lonely Hearts

Lost and lonely hearts
Longing for promise
But afraid to dare.
It can not last,
This convulsion of intent
Without the will to seize not yet
And wrest substance from the dream.

Lonely longing
Is the sentry's lot,
Left to guard the rear
When comrades have moved on.
A sad and weary plight
Watching victory
From the corner of your eye
While looking back.

Suspended

It is a toe hold life,
Inching up the face of a forever dream,
Nearing the summit of an awesome hope:
An endless stream of humanity
Nearly ready for the other side,
Expecting to return home
On a filament of promise
Suspended from beyond.

The Cat's Cradle

It was just a piece of string
Looped gently around our fingers;
A child's play for rainy days
When we occupied ourselves
With a small business of creation.
When careful fingers maneuvered
In and out and around
Pulling the string oh so finely,
The cats cradle became a real thing
A new arrangement of space
Suspended there before our wondering eyes,
Held between our palms
Like the energy of prayer
On a sunrise morning.

Now we weave and spin
A new arrangement of affairs,
A cats cradle as wide as the world,
As brilliant as the morning sun,
Gently stringing threads of business
And affection from soul to soul
Across the space perceived between
The vision and hope we find before us.

The Wind

A wind is blowing through our lives,
Ruffling hair
And sending shivers up and down our spines.
Wind blown seeds,
These awful mysteries and exquisite dreams,
Conceived in hearts
Grown wider than their inheritance,
Borne aloft by gusts of hope,
Carried off on puffs of thought,
Above any height we dared imagine
Before our birth into the storm.

The Dawn

Oh thou Mystery
Deeper than the mind can fathom,
We stretch to see over the smallest rock or clod.
We seem unable to find our way
Beyond the very next step forward.
We know the sumptuous feast of life
Yet live in poverty of spirit.

Now blessing and honor dance before us,
Every moment full of celebration,
Every turn a revelation.
We wonder if it will be possible to sustain:
Our gaze at the intensity of dawn.

Tears of gratitude and dismay
Accompany the end of night,
Eyes blinded by the light of day,
A crazy mixture of agony and delight,
Seeing all of life
Salute before our sad and weary eyes.

Watching The Universe

These eyes and ears
Watch and listen
To the universe
Like a shy and anxious
Wallflower,
Staged in a corner
While others dance.

