

NEW YEAR'S MORNING

Their two grown children have gone their separate ways. The sky outside is gray, trees barren. Within reach, his wife gently removes ornaments from the tree & places them in boxes. Their two dogs are moping, prisoners of a common melancholy. Only Coco, their siamese, is unaffected. She dashes around their house, stops to scrutinize the flashy balls & bells, then jumps, following angels into a box.

IN THEIR NUMBER

He's aware of the homeless in his city & it scares him. He sees them unshaven, unbathed, begging just up the street. Sometimes he gives them a few dollars. Sometimes he ignores them. Sometimes, in dreams, he sees himself in their number. He never invites them in. Not even the children. Instead he mails checks, small ones, to the Salvation Army. To ease his conscience.

LISTENING

When this other voice starts in I listen, some times taking notes. There's a subtle authority, a certain wisdom in this voice, & I'm curious to know what it knows & if I can use it.

DEEP WATERING

This summer I'm deep watering the trees around our cabin. Last year beetles took two pines. Now their figures, without needles are bone-like & threatening. Watering is a kind of prayer.