

The Thousand Years Turning

for ann



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for Ann

(December 25, 2000)

Love, Richard

1.

If the pin oak took a shingle
and the wind another,
I'd say the roof is like a gray
balding man in winter.

2.

Nor can I climb there.
Fall leaves like broken brittle
teeth have choked the gutters.
Soon ice. Up there is horrible.

3.

Wisdom, too. Slouching
in the attic, making a pattern
of footprints, I stopped to read it.
A dead language. Dust.

4.

Dearest Ann, why do you love me?
When I take the nails and the hammer,
a door invariably is ajar. Fragile
figurines tilt on the slanted shelves.

5.

Once, my soul
descended into the basement
with a pointless treasure map
to the corners of dark and cold.

6.

A thousand years is turning.
Summer last we hauled rocks
to the lakefront to shore up
the yard of Festus seed.

7.

And Fall was a breath
of radiant grass, sunsets,
and water so clear
we couldn't tell up from down.

8.

Though in as much time from now
none of this will be remembered.
The girls are well. The tree and deck
dazzle with light strung as best I can.

9.

Sometimes I think I hear the beast.
You say, *It's only the dog running
across the dam because she likes you.*
I open the door, you're right, I pet her.

10.

The thousand years turning! And we
are at the still point. Night in the lake.
Lake of stars in the deep, dark sky.
Everything around us is filled with light.

The Turning of a Thousand Years

(for Ann)

Savant Cards

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