

Poems:

Philip Miller

(Kvasir poetry reading February 2007)

Winter

As it falls
we celebrate
poking ashes
in the grate

to get some flames
for this long night,
little tongues
of flickering light.

Outside stars
twinkle, cold,
light years away
and old,

shining long
before fire
became a word
for our desire,

before we walked
this strange earth
where death must
follow every birth,

and winter falls
as sure as fate,
and we light a fire
and celebrate.

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Spring

is one strong wire
spiraled into
a dozen centers
of itself—
the machine
in mattresses
and wind-up clocks,
suspending us so we may rest
while cocking quick levers of alarm
(see also: mousetraps, guns).
It is the coiled seedling
underground about to worm
itself toward light,
the snake about to strike.
Here's one from underneath
a sleek limousine, an oiled shock
catching in its tight whorls
the sun refracted blue
as the whirlpool
we enter in our dreams,
the vortex Dante descended
gyrating down
where sinners howl,
deep as the spinet's lowest notes
struck on strings
of taunt steel springs
that groan and growl.

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