

dying in 1999

I wish I'd died in 1999
when three of the numbers
were the same.

It's a better year in which to die,
than the one I'll not choose
for me.

It's a better year to have lived
towards;
it might have ended
a better life.

I might have slept more often in peace
knowing I'd die
at a time like that.

I might have made
some
thing
that could
encapsulate a truth,

or felt the calm of settled snow
within me on
frequent days.

I might have formed a stronger shape,
and framed a tranquil scene;
moving always with
deliberate grace
against the sky of
brilliant
darkened
blue.

I might have walked along with pace,
and known a safe and pleasant
way
to go.

I might have brought you with me too,
for us both to breathe
an air

of crisp and
gentle difference,
through a shared and
perfumed
nose.

I might have felt less pain if
my biography was
changed.

I could have had a
different name
and been more kind
across the hours
to an
other
aching self,

that would carve the loaf with confidence
and be content to
think alone.

I might have made you happy
and learned to spell
more beautiful
words,

but there is still time to die,
in another,
different
year.

There is still time
for a tree
to grow inside
my ear.