



Sounds like  
it ought  
to mean  
something

Poetry by Christopher William Purdom  
Volume I



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**226 Press**

Philadelphia



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# 1. Enormous Purple Winter Shadows

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*Eventide*

In the half light I can only remember  
Whether yesterday follows tomorrow  
Or if Amarillo blooms around the corner.

Upon awakening I am already four  
When the future lies forgotten as at dusk  
And shadows lie in puddles neath the trees.

Near dark my mother cannot unpark her car  
For our memory of machines dies empty  
In the half light I can only remember.

## Enormous Purple Winter Shadows

*For Geoffrey*

Sometimes in Paoli  
When the cool dark air is only a breath away  
I hear the trains calling me back  
Until we board  
And the legs of the blonde across the aisle  
Become more real than all the nights  
I slept as a child in Texas

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Radnor Station Where the Trees Grow Raucous*

Quibbling over colors, patterns  
and names of designers; banging  
on neighboring rooftops; shouting  
"shush" at the tops of their voices.

2. Let Me Never Recall  
Your Lake Red Dreaming

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Holidays*

Annapolis rained last Christmas,  
Mothers slash daughters competing  
For clothes, attention from husbands  
Slash fathers whose lives are for sons'  
Electronics, football, brothers  
And girls who are not daughters slash  
Wives of themselves, and this Christmas  
Annapolis will rain again.

Let Me Never Recall Your Lake Red Dreaming

*A Little Too Much Reality (Night)*

Amarillo's In-  
ternational Air-  
port is out by Cloth  
World past the Big  
Texan along three-  
thirty-five where mo-  
tel signs have replaced  
the stars and trucks are  
the only comets.

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*A Little Too Much Reality (Day)*

In every direction it's the same damn thing so  
We close our eyes half way to avoid confusion it  
Limits the scope and keeps out the sun just  
As our hats hold back the sky but  
Nothing can hold back the wind even  
The cattle get carried away now  
There's only the road and the trucks and  
The dust and the sky and the sun.



### 3. We Were Weak / Rust Petal Sky

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*Hidden*

Life lies in little gestures  
Minor manipulations  
Slight adjustments of meaning  
Pushing dreams behind your ear  
Desire under your collar  
And visions back up your sleeve.  
Subtlety binds forever.

*...Lost*

Your roots have branches and my  
Branches have roots so I stood  
As you stood in the hollow  
And waited I imagined  
For a tendril to explore.  
Maybe next time our seeds will  
Fall closer on the dark ground.

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Affirmation*

The first moving hand signaled  
Time and the second signaled  
Victory but the winners'  
Smile was given back to me  
A trophy singed in honor  
Into the endless replay  
Of my hallucinations.

*Twenty-two and Waiting in North Carolina*

Tight lime green and white plaid pants  
Hair pulled back, large teddy bear  
Staring intently at her  
Own identification.  
Will they believe she is that  
Person, will they let her fly?  
Does she, will she let herself?

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Secret Weapon*

Will we not be shunned by those  
Who define our boundaries  
And dominate our shelter?  
Who would choose to be cast out  
Into the cold and the dark?  
Why it is she, he, they, us,  
We who have discovered fire!

*Why?*

Once upon a time I did  
not sleep for six sensuous  
months now lost in clarity  
of mind yet one vague image  
left behind a longing sense  
of dread and futures waving  
from the window of a train

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Flashpoint*

Love no singularity  
Of physical intent is  
God spiritually intense in  
All the lives I Am leads us  
Disrupting rigid structures  
We impose upon ourselves  
And the glorious chaos



*Rise and Fall*

Am I some mad galloping  
Horse of the Apocalypse  
ridden urgently and hard  
in pleasure or abject fear  
crying out at your beauty?  
Whose mind are we in, whose heart  
and why do we keep running?

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Half Life*

The door is locked and I too  
young and too unsequential  
stand forgetting? rejecting?  
obvious implications  
of green robes, missing persons,  
preconceived relationships,  
poised and defiant stances.

*Borderline*

The sun has left Laguna leaving  
Nothing, like I have never seen before.  
Persistent, insistent Nothing  
Crashing waves of blackness against  
The almost something shore and  
The lights of California which  
The Nothing's stars ignore.

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Variations On a Joke Part Funny*

The world is half full of  
Women who cannot perceive  
How much beauty wells within.  
An engineer, I find fault  
In the glass, seek to construct  
Of myself a better mirror  
For all. My mind was made large.

*Repeat*

I never turned around I  
know who you look like you look  
like who you were looking for  
sound like her too sound like her  
suspended in the doorframe  
caught in an indiscretion  
no I never turned around.

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Silence*

My voice discomforts. Must I  
disclaim my eye with lawyer  
ease of fiction to preserve  
your lines in ecstatic sands  
of pleased breathless oceans  
tongued to me and lived in truth  
or shout, and bring down kingdoms?

*Recalling the New Year*

What an odd time to change clothes,  
just after the old year, just  
before the old world, or  
do I have you backwards? No  
matter, the moment stands still,  
proud, forever, whatever  
you think you've experienced since.





4. Spring is somewhat legless

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Two Things Susan Pierce Said Comma Reflections On*

I am thankful for the knowing  
And the being known  
For communities of love without  
Fear and people without closets for the being of  
my self  
And the self of my being most recently  
discovered and still  
Discovering for friends who see me, poet,  
Artist, voyeur, and dancing queen, programmer,  
activist, writer, and  
Story-teller, every man, woman and child within  
me, within The Body, the Word  
Made flesh, the Christ, the Logos, the all knowing  
incarnate  
I am thankful for suspicion, for revelation, in  
small  
Actions and sudden impulses made whole  
Again  
As God Intended.

Spring is somewhat legless

*Vigiling On a Hill All Morning in Lynchburg*

Normally I stand  
over my weight-bearing, child-carrying  
gently-curved left hip, my running,  
kicking right leg thrown to one side  
like the unrelated  
afterthought it usually is. Unfortunately  
Thomas Road is steeply slanted  
in the wrong direction. The Baptist Church  
across the street would have me stand  
over my straight right hip in agreement with  
my facial hair, leaving the apparently  
shorter leg  
dangling  
hopelessly  
disconnected  
from my ground in the damp October air.  
I would be much more  
comfortable  
turning my back on the pain.

Sounds like it ought to mean something

*Do Not Let Our Domesticated Little Friend the  
Ice Cube Fool You*

Water

Frozen in the wild

Does not sleep in trays

But slips into the silent streets of night

To sweep the unsuspecting

From their unsure feet

Spring is somewhat legless

*Persistence*

sky trees wall plants meditating people  
reflections in the bio pond rippled  
by the wind destroyed by the ducks playing  
duck games but reflections do return not  
ours for we will rise and leave but the plants  
and the wall and the trees and the sky will  
survive even night to reflect again

