

Horatian salutation

by [Brett Foster](#) in the [January 12, 2010](#) issue

Reader, here is no know-nothing
muddle-mouth grinning till his time's up,
nor this month's charismatic hotshot—
let's be glad for that.

Nor is it time for deeper, troubled things,
the heaviness of swollen hands
that knit our sweaters or underfed
teenagers who look like my six year old,
sweet in his warm bed.

Shall I go on, then, or end it?

It's not even an occasion for lyrical
greatness (who can bear or hear it?), or honoring
the slain and scars of veterans

(how to sustain it?) or excursions
on hermeneutical wings along the Word.

Or less estimable, more complicated forms
of happiness:

breathless days when we became better
than ourselves,
as if awaking from a dream.

Let other songs bless or curse with big decibels.
I leave this business, such as it is,
to higher-minded poets or tireless annalists.

I sing simply of Love, of grace, and those graces
who are your friends, warm with life and giving
you grief, playfully—these late evenings in December.
And I sing of such beautiful people, even closer,
safe and asleep nearby, here and there, her

and her and him, so pleasing
and peace be with them,
and you too, Reader, you too.