

Bucolic

by [Muriel Nelson](#) in the [December 10, 2014](#) issue

So tonight we carol again squinting
at words by candlelight: *betwixt*
an ox and a silly poor ass,
and (louder) *mortal flesh keep silence.*

Animal warmth in this darkness rises
among us with each singer's breath, as shadows
suggest great slumbering beasts
whose fur brushes us with peace and eases

our way to believe *Incarnatus est.*

Bodies and beast-shadows sway and grow still.

No one startles as candle

flames tongue air that now seems alive. Breathing. Blessed.