

Bethsaida

by [J. Barrie Shepherd](#) in the [October 25, 2016](#) issue

(John 5:1-9)

These waters, I must trouble for myself,
in an age of the absence of angels, as I plunge,
first of the day to break the lambent surface of the pool,
and commence my daily reaching after miracles,
swimming laps at almost eighty-one.

The miracle I seek these recent years has been defined,
and then refined, by that old friendly temporizer, “yet”;
no longer seeking not-to-die-at-all, just not-to-die-quite-yet,
to win a couple bonus years, in which to pen another poem
or two, to pile a few more chosen words onto this heap
I have—for Oh so long—been working on.

Any healing that might come will clearly have to be
short term. Until, that is, I reach the final turn,
take up my beggar’s bed, and walk.