

## As Winter Comes

Our streets are silent again tonight.  
This malaise has its own way  
of being hushed and soundless.  
An absence of others around us  
dawns deeper as each day passes.

We're sliding inexorably into  
autumn in this Southern Hemisphere.  
We'd become so used to the sun  
burning off clouds and weather,  
that might have held us down.

Perhaps this year, as autumn fades  
into winter, we might have to  
pick each tree bare of dead leaves.  
Come spring we may have to  
sow them back again, tree by tree.

We're being asked to find new ways  
of being free in the world; within ourselves  
and between one another.  
We need to learn to take time  
to speak out in uncommon ways.

We've spent so much time  
forgetting what truly matters -  
perhaps it's earth that feels we have  
significant things to remember,  
reasons we have simply forgotten.

Why we are here? What did we

came for? Who we need to be?  
How we can live into that?  
Where we now need to go?  
Answers to all of these are new.

Time and space is what we now have.  
A chance that's been created to wonder.  
A chance to forget so much that  
really doesn't matter.  
Will we take it, or simply wish our  
way back to what once was?

*Craig O'Flaherty 2020*