

An Unlikely Christmas Poem After Niedecker

*“I fade the color of my wine
that an afternoon might live
foiled with shine and brittle”*

Christmas is what it needs

To be— a cultural

Warmth & interference,

Solstitial good &

Reverie of

Pagan root & human

Luminance— whatever

You believe

Or don't. But the ruinous

Gaudiness, the upheaval of

Life by commerce &

Obligation blunts all goodness

The holly-day presupposes.—

Have yourself a merry

Fire in the dark.—

So that, to say a simple

Phrase, *peace on earth*, is

A cliché, an empty

Mouth stuffed with triteness

When the words themselves—

PEACE

ON

EARTH—

Are so necessary, so vital &

So clear as to confound

Anyone in a lifetime (mine)

Where such was never seen

Heard of, nor (mostly)

Imagined

But, instead, in “desolate,

Dark weeks”—

In the preponderance of liquor &

Cheap trinkets

Which we nuzzle

As if they could nourish

When, in crowds,

We gather—

Of strangers, or the strangely

Familial— to evoke

The sacred while embracing

A pose—

O Xmas I love

What I think

You mean—

Even now, in the droning

Fake mirth & caroling—

That we mortals

Are as kin—

Peace, yes— o peace,

Peace, peace, yes—

Peace!