

# Something in Delight

a reflection  
by Charles Wolfegang Keane Tuomi

c is the letter assigned to represent the speed of light in formulas such as  $e = mc^2$ . It stands for “celerity,” which means “swiftness of movement”.

The letter “c” has more than one mode of behavior, like light itself (which sometimes behaves as a wave and sometimes behaves like a particle).

In *soft mode*, analogous to a *wave*, “c” can spoof the sound of the letter “s.”

In *hard mode*, more like a *pebble* or *particle*, “c” mimics the sound of the letter “k.”

S is light in flight, when it is Singing.

K is light when it Knocks.

Silently, though, like the letter K in the word, “Knocks.” Light is quiet.

You don’t hear it, but it is always there. Always sharing. Always loving. Always knocking. Asking to be let in.



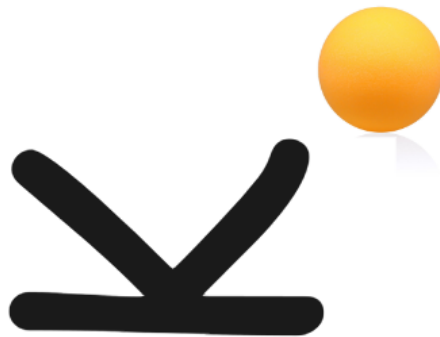


“Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. *Day and night they never stop saying:*

“‘Holy, holy, holy  
is the Lord God Almighty,  
who was, and is, and is to come.’”

*Revelation 4:8*

Turn light in “K” mode sideways. *Rotate* the letter K onto its side.



Picture a bright yellow ball bouncing off a court surface. Tennis. Where every game starts with: “Love. Love.” Or a ping pong ball, if you prefer. I might. Picture a laser beam tilted at an angle, striking a mirror and bouncing off. Or a moon,

dipping, falling, then rising, reborn as a sun. A miracle, a apocalypse during which one “world” ends, a Ragnarok in which another “world” is reborn, like a phoenix rising from ashes, which happens every single fucking day. Until it doesn’t.

Butterflies are metaphors for light. Consider the path a butterfly takes, Never direct. Butterflies flit and dip and fall and rise, twisty. Like a series of awkward, irregular dawns and dusks, drawn by the unruly pen of a young child.



Sort of like a sideways S.

Ever had a butterfly land on your finger? You might feel a tickle, but it is unlikely you felt it add a *burden*. You can *carry* a butterfly with you for free. They are, literally, light. And butterflies behave like light when they land on something. Enticed by the promise of nectar, a butterfly makes contact with a plant. She “alights” on a plant. And then she drinks, feeds, nourishing herself, if the promise of nectar was true. But whether or not that promise of nectar was true, she allows herself to be used as a carrier, as the *bearer of a memory*. She permits pollen from the plant to taint her, to coat her body, legs, and proboscis. And then, like light, she bounces off, to test another promise, where the process is repeated. But she carries the pollen from the first plant with her, just as light conveys the memory of what it has witnessed into the eyes of a human being, and in doing so she facilitates the process of pollination, during which pollen from one flower fertilizes the female part of another flower. This is a process without which human beings would not exist.



“My yoke is easy and my burden is *light*.”

Matt 11:30

“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,  
and whoever captures souls is wise.”

Proverbs 11:30

K is the 11th letter of the English alphabet.

Substitute.

K:30. Or C:30, if you like.

“C dirty.”

*Tainted* light.

Pollination.

Like Judas, who received 30 pieces of silver for betraying  
Christ.

With a Kiss.



The entire food chain is premised on this light-like behavior of pollinators, which is so underappreciated that we have been allowing the population of pollinators to drop precipitously due to human behavior. And if we don't stop soon, we will get what's coming to us for doing so.

Christ showed us the nature of nature in no uncertain terms with his own Crucifixion.

Like Christ, she will not stop giving until she can no longer give. She is slutty. She will allow us to treat her like trash, crucify her, flog her, bleed her, and kill her, dead as dead can be. She shows us every night a possible future. Look at the lifeless moon that hangs above our heads like a Sword of Damocles.

An *actual* apocalypse. The Cabins at the End of the World will be spaces in which we cower, terrified of one another as we squabble over ever-dwindling resources with ever-weakened hearts as we watch the skies for butterflies that we let die because of lies. Until we fossilize.



Surprise!

“And God said ‘Let light be,’ and light is.”

Genesis 1:3

Young’s Literal Translation



“After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth



to **guard** the way to the tree of life.”

Genesis 3:24

“Teach your children what we have taught our children: that the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the children of the earth.”

**Chief Seattle.  
A Human  
Being.**

“We do not weave the web of life, we are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.”

Resistance to change is built into human language. Phonetics, for instance.

Consider how similar these two words sound when pronounced.

“New?!”



“No!!”

Like a flaming sword flashing back and forth, there is both danger and wisdom in such things.

Pretend for a moment that there may be a reason why the words are similar<sup>1</sup>. The connection might describe some kind of human intuition or emotional compulsion that *resists change*. Anyone who has tried to implement change in the world on any scale, even within a household, can probably attest to the strength of this force. It might make one despair of things ever actually getting truly better on a large scale.

Except, technically speaking, this linguistic “coincidence” does not represent resistance to *change*, but resistance to *newness*. It is resisting something being *added to what already is*.

What if virtuous change is a changeless uncovering, a rediscovery of something that already exists but has merely been lost? Different than this current state of lostness, but not truly “new”? What if this second language coincidence is like a pair of cherubim, guiding us back to a tree of life? What if we simply need to...

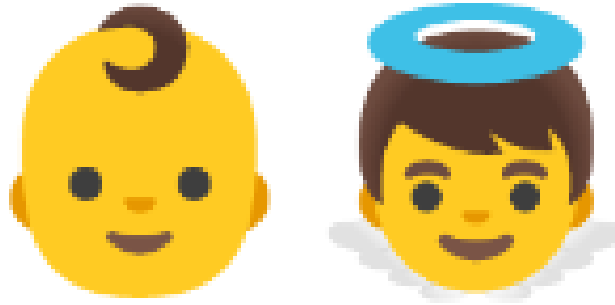
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<sup>1</sup> or believe, if you are so disposed



# “Know”

what we once



# “Knew”

What if it is simply an instruction to become, once again, like we once were? Light bearers. Seeing things as they are. Not burdened with history and trauma and metaphors and expectations but experiencing the *truth* of each moment, and *openly sharing* that truth, whatever it contains?

Like light bearers. Butterflies. Angels. Cherubim. Children. Fools.

“And God said, ‘Let light be’ and light is”  
Gen 1:3

“The prudent keep their knowledge to themselves, but a fool’s heart blurts out folly.”  
Prov 12:23

“You’re the light of the world...Don’t light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.”  
Matt 5:14-15

“become like little children”  
Matt 18:3



“he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a *flaming sword flashing back and forth*”  
Gen 3:24

Look at a chess board at the beginning of a game from above. It's an open mouth.  
The cherubim in the game, the little players, are *rows of teeth*.



Dragons are like butterflies or cherubim all grown up, who really talk, and generate heat. Dragons are important figures in myths originating in many countries in Asia.

“you then asia”:  
“The 🧨 burning 🧨 ...keep it up.”

“The infants will not shut up. Their crying? Incessant. Their shrieking?  
Inescapable.”



“I picture a massive bird’s nest with a mob of small blind baby faces. Hungry  
mouths seeking open. Uvulas thrashing like punching bags.”

“a lunatic frenzy of voices share the chilly air around me”

“Some are kind and soft spoken. Others rant and threaten vengeance.”

“Harsh whispers of lips inches from my ear, threats and lusty vows”

“mad cackling laughters”

“insults”, “gushing thanks”, “sirens”

The City of Hell is walled by a skull, a space occupied by an Army of Great  
Unspoken Truths that ricochet like pinballs inside a cacophonous cabin.

The name of the little girl played by Kristen Cui in the film *Knock at the Cabin* can be interpreted an *alternative* response to “New.” Rather than “No,” “cultured and literate”<sup>2</sup>, Wen represents the flip side of “New? No!”: “Wen.” To “know” is an emotional and psychological, collective archaeological dig, an uncovering and rediscovery of the beauty of our indigenous selves, our inner children, the light that we keep in a box in order to obtain little trinkets and rewards from society.

Knew?



Wen?! When we were young, of course.  
Pollinate?

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<sup>2</sup> this is what the Chinese name Wen means

*Just Imagine.*

Watch the scene featuring Wen watching the grasshoppers.



Try to remember being six or seven years old. Sit with her. She is all alone. *Play.*



*Listen* to the hush of the breeze through the leaves. *Feel* the warmth of the sunlight on your youthful skin. *Hear* the gentle, intermittent chirping of insects, the occasional sound of buzzing as a creature whizzes by you, the soft fluttering of bird wings in flight. Embrace the *deep and total peace* of *total immersion* in what we are doing together: you, Wen, and I (“you then asia”). Truly seeing what is before us, being where we are, in this moment.

Wen is being empathetic, trying to understand the *inner state, energy* and *personality* of the grasshoppers through quiet, close attention and careful observation. It is this moment that is later referenced by one of her fathers, who says there is nothing in the world “*more perfect and flawed*” than their family.



There is nothing more  
flawed and perfect



in this world  
than our family.

Wen has a scar from surgery to “correct” a cleft lip. Representing a speech impediment. Healed.

Perfect and flawed.



“level” - Perfect *and flawed*



“lovely”

“Flawed” IS perfect  
birthmarks scars *freckles* asymmetries  
*Before* we started wearing makeup.  
We put makeup on people in coffins to hide the truth.  
It wears off.

“For *dust* we are, and to *dust* we shall return.”

Genesis 3:19

I attended a retreat given by poet and thinker Mark Nepo at Copper Beech Institute in West Hartford, CT in October, 2019. Mark is a cancer survivor. Most but not all of the people on the retreat were cancer survivors or patients, too. Not me. I had survived other stuff. The retreat was not about living with cancer but it was informed by learnings Mark Nepo took from his experience, and through group participating, the experience of others in the room.

It was something of a unique experience. Over multiple days, Mark read a number of his poems. Mark also shared stories about himself, traditional wisdom stories, and stories he has heard about other people as he has embraced his role as teacher and healer. He talked, and we all talked, about meaningful things.

Mark has written a number of books I would highly recommend. One of his books is entitled, *Drinking from the River of Light*.

Copper Beech Institute is an incredible setting. I have attended multiple retreats there. There is a large labyrinth on the grounds, which I would walk in the mornings and during breaks. It is a powerful space. You travel a winding path, heading toward something of an altar in the middle, a large stone circle, getting close to it, then moving away, then close again, then away. Sort of like a flitting butterfly. I took two small, rounded stones with me one morning into the labyrinth, one to represent my father, who I never met, and one to represent my mother. The story goes that they were not married. My mom has told me many times how much she loved my father, but he was married to another woman. I was born out of wedlock.

My mom told me they went to California together in February, 1971. The San Fernando Earthquake happened while they were there. My mom interpreted that earthquake as a divine sign that what she was doing, being with a married man, loving someone married to someone else, was wrong. She blamed herself for the earthquake, and fled back to her home in Boston, MA on a plane. My dad drove back, arriving, as I have been told, in time for them to spend Valentine's Day together. And it was that *pollinating time* on Valentine's Day that they spent together which led directly to me and all the trouble I have caused. So I am told.

I have felt so badly my entire life for my mom and what she lost because of becoming burdened with me. Also for the fact that she did not get to love the man she loved. I know how that feels. So I took the two stones and I laid them side by

side on the altar together at the center of the labyrinth at Copper Beech Institute in West Hartford, CT. A lot of other people have laid stones there, many with words and names painted on them. It was my way of letting my mom and my dad spend some time together, alone, at peace, unjudged by this fucking nightmare of a world that imposes so many goddamn stupid rules on people.

That morning, two women attending the retreat were also walking the labyrinth. One looked like a retired super model. Tall and graceful, she was gently cradling a coffee mug as she walked, contemplatively, and she offered me an open, warm smile. When we reached a point in our lonely strolling where our lines sort of momentarily converged before leading us away from one another again.

Lord, was she pretty. Wrinkles and creases and spots and freckles. Fascinating. A face you could just stare and stare into for years and years. What a smile.

Another lady in perhaps her late thirties or forties was seated on a bench, writing in a notebook as I walked.

There was something about the light that day through the trees. I can't describe it completely or adequately. All I can say is that it struck me profoundly, the light through the trees, the brassy color of it and way it lit the leaves. I also noticed on one tree in particular a leaf or formation of leaves that looked to me like, maybe, well..couldn't be, never mind.

During that day's session led by Mark Nepo, when it came time for people to share, the woman who had been sitting on the bench and writing stood up and told everyone that, during the morning, she had been walking the labyrinth and looked over into the trees and she had seen...an angel. She wrote a reflection about it. And she shared what she had written. A poem about an angel.

I was flabbergasted. I, too, had written a poem. I too had seen something in the light. I, too, had seen...I saw it in the trees. Never mind.

I had written partly to express emotions about my experience, to share what was on my mind as I walked. And also to impress the supermodel. Maybe I would hand it over at some point. I knew I would never have the courage to do that, but what was the harm in pretending.



But this other woman, a bespectacled divorced woman with a son, had shared herself in front of everyone. She had bravely said something very implausible that I could, in a sense, back up and support and in doing so, share the experience with her. So - gulp - I raised my hand. And I told everyone I too had been there at the same time. I too had seen something in the light. I do believe I used the word, "angel." And I too had written a poem. I stood up and read that poem. It was terrifying. I felt naked. Maybe I was. I am absent-minded, so who knows.

Afterwards several people came over and complimented or encouraged me about it. One woman tapped me lovingly several times on my heart and looked me in the eyes and said, "Poet. Poet. Poet."

The lady who wrote the poem and I talked after the session. It was the final session, the retreat was over. We had lunch with a number of other people before leaving. She sort of hinted at wanting to be in contact with me but I was too shy. I was thinking about talking to her after lunch, but she left the lunch table abruptly. Almost as if she was angry.

Later I contacted Copper Beech via email, asking if it was possible to get contact information for a fellow retreatant, or to have a message passed to her, my own contact information. I gave the woman's first name, which was all I knew.

They said they had no such person listed among the attendants.

So who was the angel? What was in that light? A cluster of leaves? Beams of sun? The beautiful lady drinking coffee who fueled my creativity? Or the brave woman with the gentle voice who stood and proclaimed her truth, and in doing so, encouraged me to do the same? Why would I try to choose among them?

Cherubim is plural, after all. It all formed a tapestry. Boy was that light beautiful, though. It all was.

This event led to me writing a lot in the months and years that followed. It reinvigorated my latent desire to express myself creatively after a long, dark period of hibernation and silence.

What follows is the poem I wrote that day.

**the labyrinth's gift**

Remember,  
there is only the path  
and we who share it  
and the morning sunlight  
on the leaves

and the quiet truths we  
earn at the center:

that the way out is the  
way in  
that one cannot enter  
without changing

that despite our  
strange and inefficient,  
intricate and  
non-elliptical orbits

we are always heading  
in the right direction

because the path is a  
thread made of we  
who share it and those  
small dark pebbles  
crunching underfoot -  
felt and listened for,  
kicked and broken and  
changed - have

a trustworthy gravity  
all our  
own.





The labyrinth at Copper Beech Institute  
West Hartford, CT  
October 2019



‘But wait, you might observe. You wrote “you then asia” well before 2019.’  
To which I respond, “yes, love, I know.” And yet.

[Here we are.](#)