The New Jerusalem

The moonlight plumps down into the city  
with the sweet softness of a wet digestive on your tongue  
The smell of snow on the common  
and of prayer in the Trinity Chapel - an old friend  
*I haven’t seen you in a while  
Well, I’ve been around*

The city’s breath breaks in waves over the oak trees  
ruggling walkers’ hair  
to remind them that it’s there

Staggering lads chase ultimately chaste embraces  
just to escape the cold  
but it comes to nothing  
It comes to nothing every night

under puffed clouds pressed  
in layers like a wedding dress  
The Earth is Bride  
The Moon is Maid  
The Sun is… coming back one day

but the bell tower on the Baptist Church  
hasn’t rung since the war  
they’re still waiting to restore it  
when the graveyard on the hill  
has drunk its fill

It’s too early to be *up this early?*Too late to be *out this late?*It’s now, but also isn’t yet  
the morning will be better, but

for now  
the moonlight plumps down over the snow  
with the reckless affection of a friend  
waiting with you for the last bus home

which is sitting at a red light  
a mile down the road