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