

## Reading

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Perhaps it will happen this way:

Someone will hand you a package.

You will untie  
the ribbon of Handel's Messiah  
and Bing Crosby's White Christmas,

Tear off  
the glittering paper of department store windows,  
and strings of colored lights

Open  
the box made from old cards,  
friends names fading  
beneath sweet greetings

Toss aside  
the tissue paper of stockings  
stuffed with oranges  
and candles lit in hope

And hold in your hands

The desert at twilight  
colors sinking across  
its sandy shoulders  
like a silk scarf tossed

The sky at night  
stars skating too slowly to see  
over black ice  
tracing elegant curves

The old growth forest  
new shoots springing  
from the root of stumps cut down,

A thousand faces of human terror  
and human joy  
singing.

You touch it all,  
an ache transformed.  
earth, life, evening sky.

This is the Gift.  
Open it.