

Bethsaida

by [J. Barrie Shepherd](#) in the [October 25, 2016](#) issue

(John 5:1–9)

These waters, I must trouble for myself,  
in an age of the absence of angels, as I plunge,  
first of the day to break the lambent surface of the pool,  
and commence my daily reaching after miracles,  
swimming laps at almost eighty-one.

The miracle I seek these recent years has been defined,  
and then refined, by that old friendly temporizer, “yet”;  
no longer seeking not-to-die-at-all, just not-to-die-quite-yet,  
to win a couple bonus years, in which to pen another poem  
or two, to pile a few more chosen words onto this heap  
I have—for Oh so long—been working on.

Any healing that might come will clearly have to be  
short term. Until, that is, I reach the final turn,  
take up my beggar’s bed, and walk.