

## **The birthday of the World** by Marge Piercy

On the birthday of the world  
I begin to contemplate  
what I have done and left  
undone, but this year  
not so much rebuilding  
of my perennially damaged  
psyche, shoring up eroding  
friendships, digging out  
stumps of old resentments  
that refuse to rot on their own.  
No, this year I want to call  
myself to task for what  
I have done and not done  
for peace. How much have  
I dared in opposition?  
How much have I put  
on the line for freedom?  
For mine and others?  
As these freedoms are pared,  
sliced and diced, where  
have I spoken out? Who  
have I tried to move? In  
this holy season, I stand  
self-convicted of sloth  
in a time when lies choke  
the mind and rhetoric  
bends reason to slithering  
choking pythons. Here  
I stand before the gates  
opening, the fire dazzling  
my eyes, and as I approach  
what judges me, I judge  
myself. Give me weapons  
of minute destruction. Let  
my words turn into sparks.