

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.