

# Maybe

*Poem for Chuck H.*

I met Jesus on my walk today  
Didn't recognize him at first, we were both a bit  
grayer.

He was walking his dog, Miss Ellie  
She'd been just a pup last time I saw her Back  
around the time I played his Herod  
And they brought him to me, bound  
He refused to do his tricks,  
So I'd put him in a robe and sent  
Him on his bloody way

This time we hugged, and caught up  
On who had passed away and who was still  
Alive—how nice it was to resurrect  
Old times like that

He smiled to hear I'd come to town  
To be a minister  
*You have a church yet?* he asked  
At first, of course, I thought he'd got  
The cart before the horse...

Until I thought, *what if* we ministered  
Our way into church instead  
Of churching our way around ministry?

*What if* we believed our way into religion instead  
Of religioning our way right out of belief?

*What if* instead of an icon or a bookstore label  
Or a t-shirt screen print or a bumper sticker fish  
Or a cussword or a sanctimonious set of rules

"Jesus"

Was a guy you could run into  
Out walking his dog, a guy who could converse  
About the people you both knew who were  
Dying or living or walking their dogs  
And looking for ministers, believers and guys named Jesus  
Instead of churches, religion and one more  
Multi-step justification?

*What if* we met him, you and I, and made a plan

To meet over coffee and a bagel next week—  
No tricks—just some time to catch up?

*I'll pay...*? he'd offer  
And maybe we'd let him.