

BARNEY

I love you. You love me.

He is the true Zero in his cap & bells, in the terrible
lizard of his skin. I see him

crossing the tundra in snowshoes like a big
hug coming, lost

on Earth
in a body. Consider: if I become him

what kind of suffering? This
afflicted creature, dancing

for the hostile, costumed. Venus

loves him. He loves me, has given

himself to the whole world without
mortification, given
himself to the landscape

of sap and snow and cloud, come

unto the world
and made it pregnant, singing
to the invisible family before him, swallowing

the sorrow of children—innocent, curious, extinct.
A narrow stream of tears runs right through him.

When the beloved
is in everyone, in the excited
imbecile, the timid

orgy of sleep, who
can help but think of Christ
with his sandals and lambs? Why

all of us? Why not just some? Oh
the emptiness of so much. The everlastingness. This
hug. Quivering, endured. A purple
balloon like our hearts, naked
and blown up

without flesh, wrinkles, fur. It loves
without an object of it, and how
we long to keep

the beast of it
stuffed inside us

along with the little saints & fools
who sing pitiful songs in our chests.