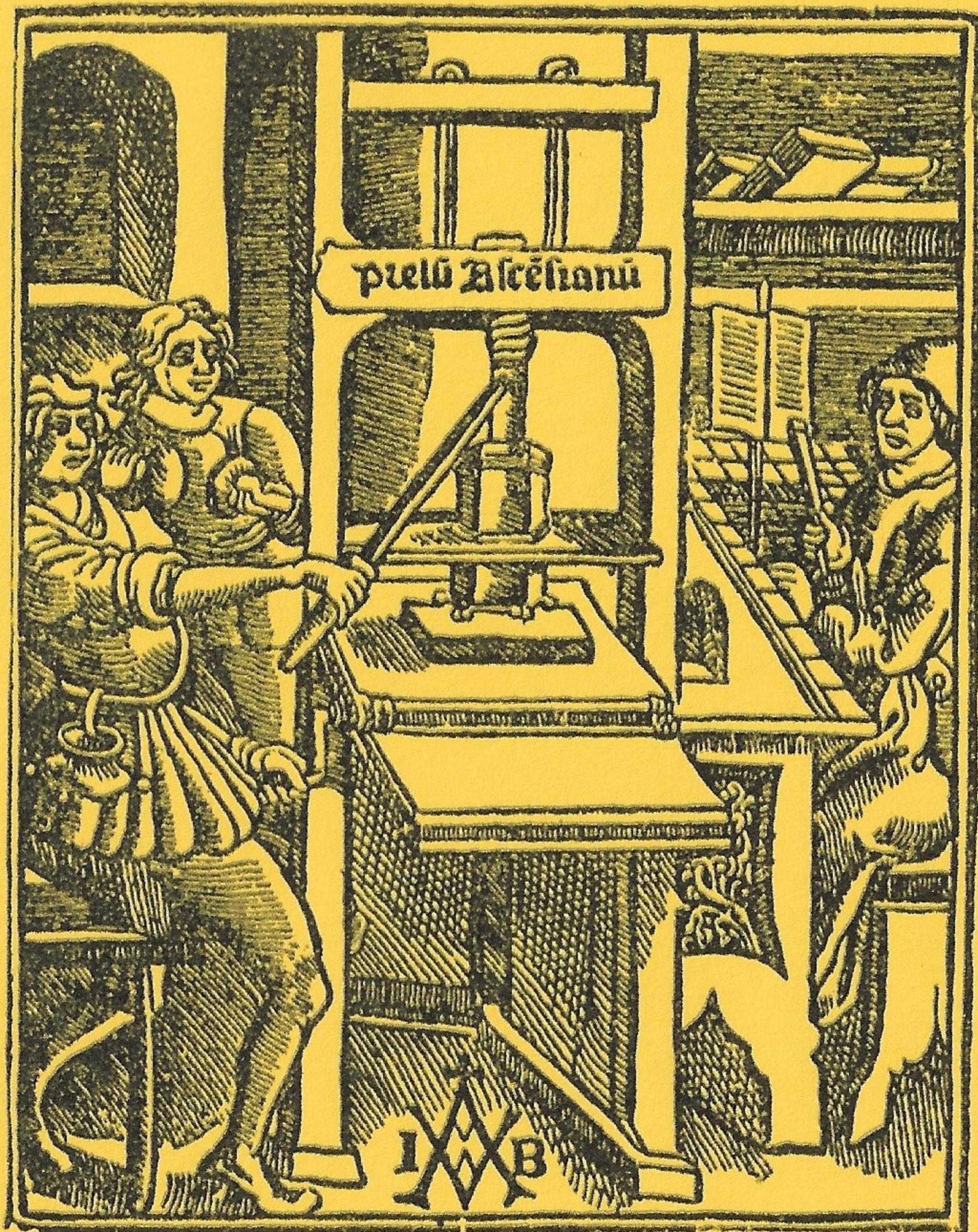


HOMEBREW



Friends —

The person who sends you these poems is both deeply unsure about their quality and hopeful they may be emissaries of connection. I wrote these between 2019 and 2021, with the first one being and outlier from 2012. I've texted some to friends and posted some on social media—but after seeing some handmade booklets and zines, I thought that might be a good way to gather up these poems and send them on their way.

Please also consider this an open invitation to send me your analog artifacts. We are all too much in the digital world. Let's make something that will enrich each other, not Big Tech.

Working on my handwriting,

Jeremy Abel

Now comes the long summer evening.

The story begins:

"High above the city, on a tall column,
stood the statue of the Happy Prince."

The glass is drained of wine
as the mourning doves lament the closing
of the day.

We gather here with our backs to the sun
awaiting the resolution.



If I could have known -

known, the way a river
knows the way to the sea -

that love calls for a loose grip,
maybe I could have saved us pain.

The simmering dread

of the day your future felt constrained
and your past a catalog of regret -
that dread made me cling to you like a shaky alibi.

Time, experience, reflection,
and your patient love taught me better.

And now I prance you this:

where I have leaned too heavily on your strength,
where I have transgressed the border between us -
you are free.

You are free,

not as a gift of my own granting,
but in the depths of your own being,
which I have only lately perceived.

Bless the kind and gentle souls.
Those who carried their share of grief
but did not fall beneath it. Rather,
were worn to a delicate glow.

Bless the kind and gentle souls.
Those who lived without fanfare —
who sought a peaceable life
and taught the way beyond words.

Bless the kind and gentle souls.
May they never be forgotten
by we who still value such lives
and wish to walk in their light steps.

You can try to escape sadness —
gathering it, pressing it,
locking it in your chest.

But midlife will crack you open.

All your techniques will fail
when the hinge point becomes a wedge,
splitting you like dry wood.

To heal this breach you must become an augur:
Finger the entrails.

Brave the gore.

Read the signs in the matter of your wounding.



"A better world is possible," they tell me.
But the distance between here and there —
how is it to be crossed?
And do we desire that world?
Do we prefer the lives we know,
doomed as they are,
to the lives that are possible?
I imagine a world on the far side of catastrophe:
Species forever lost.
Humanity depleted.
Drowned cities.
The beleaguered survivors gain the wisdom of suffering
and renew their ties to the more-than-human world.
Is this the only path to that better world:
the destruction of our own?

Look, into the trees, gentle
your eyes, engage your ancient talent
for spotting movement.

Listen for the breeze to pick up.

You will see dozens descending,
an alien visitation, sinuous,
silent, sliding to earth
from hawk height.

They come to rest in dry creek beds,
nesting on mossened rocks.

The forest floor — always
covered in them — thickens.

They arrive dead
in certain obvious ways.
But to those who look along time:
Panspermia.

Winter Haiku

line of dirty cars

on one, Dimly Reflected

orange setting sun

trudging into Wind

parking lot lights refracting

in rain wet Glasses

setting winter sun

lights the tip of Barren Tree

a brush dipped in paint

**THIS IS EITHER THE FIRST
OR ONLY ISSUE OF
HOMEBREW, A ZINE
(PAMPHLET?) (TRACT?) BY
JEREMY ABEL. FOR THE
LOVE OF GOD, PLEASE TELL
ME IF YOU DON'T WANT TO
RECEIVE ANY MORE OF
THESE. (THEY WON'T ALWAYS
INCLUDE POETRY!)**

**I AM ON THE INTERNET AT
JABEL.BLOG, WHERE YOU
CAN SUBSCRIBE TO A
WEEKLY EMAIL DIGEST OF
POSTS.**

**SEND POSTCARDS, COFFEE,
OR AMERICAN SPIRIT
CIGARETTES TO PO BOX 110
OOLITIC, IN, 47451.**