

# Twenty-two

*by Gary Hardaway*

The year begins well here  
with much needed rain  
and tee-shirt temperatures.

In Twenty-one, words  
abandoned me. Silence  
reigned. No poems visited

my dome of bone. My  
network of streets  
shrank yet further.

Precarity and loss prevailed.  
Estrangement intensified  
as we kept count of those

dead and gravely ill.  
Covid conquered us  
in ways we'd never seen.

Twenty-two begins in hope  
and dread, in vaccine  
and Omicron. We cannot

know what awaits. We  
can but guess and keep  
a small faith in what

Providence may bring.  
Let me strive to find a  
language again and

to reclaim the  
thoroughfares that  
once were mine.

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