

# Sundogs

by [Peter Dreyer](#) (March 2023)



*Vädersolstavlan*, Jacob Elbfas (after Urban målare), 1636

## Perihelion

*Only that day dawns to which we are awake. There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star. –Thoreau, Walden*

**Locked in a** quantum-physical embrace  
Waves waltz in this hallucinated space,  
Light, here or in some other place.  
If it's not now, it's at a later date  
That we sundogs will spot our fate.

Franz Schubert died in 1828,  
long before this present state.  
His wondrous music spills from my radio  
Today, and not those centuries ago—  
Another time, time doesn't know.

Perched in their places passing far  
From Sol Invictus, sun and fulcrum star,  
Those in the peanut gallery conflate  
The two, a cheery dumb hurrah—  
Impatiently, they cannot wait.

## Aphelion

*My eyes are dim, I cannot see, I have not brought my specs with me. –“The Quartermaster's Store,” World War I soldiers' song*

**Sheep may pasture**, graze and thrive  
Complacent in the watchful shepherd's sight,  
Though he will surely cut their throats one night.  
That final act is yet to be;  
As for now they sport alive,  
From cain't see to cain't see.\*

\*An Appalachian expression.

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**Peter Richard Dreyer** is a South African American writer. He is the author of *A Beast in View* (London: André Deutsch), *The Future of Treason* (New York: Ballantine), *A Gardener Touched with Genius: The Life of Luther Burbank* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan; rev. ed., Berkeley: University of California Press; new, expanded ed., Santa Rosa, CA: Luther Burbank Home & Gardens), *Martyrs and Fanatics: South Africa and Human Destiny* (New York: Simon & Schuster; London: Secker & Warburg), and most recently the novel *Isacq* (Charlottesville, VA: Hardware River Press, 2017).

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