

## Socrates

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*Brendan O'Neill*

Take Christ's birthday  
and subtract  
four hundred years.

Two men sit on stones  
and speak of  
what it means  
to live.

The teacher's words  
drill deep into  
the student's  
soul before  
the sere desert  
wind can whip  
them away.

Our power of reason is  
bound, he says  
trapped in a cave  
the five senses  
define,  
and these senses are  
the worst kind of  
liars.

The shadows that  
dance on the wall  
before us are  
just that,  
ghosts,  
thrown by a fire burning  
brightly, behind our  
backs  
and all that we see  
as real  
is not.

I think about this  
stuff,  
sometimes, in my rolling  
cave on the way to work.