



Shiva's fly

*"He who knows the god Shiva, hidden in all beings, is freed from all fetters."
(from the Upanishads)*

A fly has landed on the forehead
of the man with criss-cross socks
who cleans the face of his watch
with an off-white handkerchief.

Wrapped in cotton, his finger
circles the glass face, clockwise.
He breathes - *ah* - and polishes again
this wind-up timepiece which was his father's.

He can't get on with digital ; you need in this world
hands and pointers.
Red numbers, like the ones on the wall clock,
are too self-important : executive numbers

that rush you about. Everyone wants
their turn to come, but he's not so bothered
these days. His father used to say : *time's round,*
like your bike wheel. Ride the cycle,

keep your balance and know when to get off.
Since his father's watch stopped, all he can feel
is *more*. This fly, for instance, on his skin,
settled now between his eye-brows.

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