



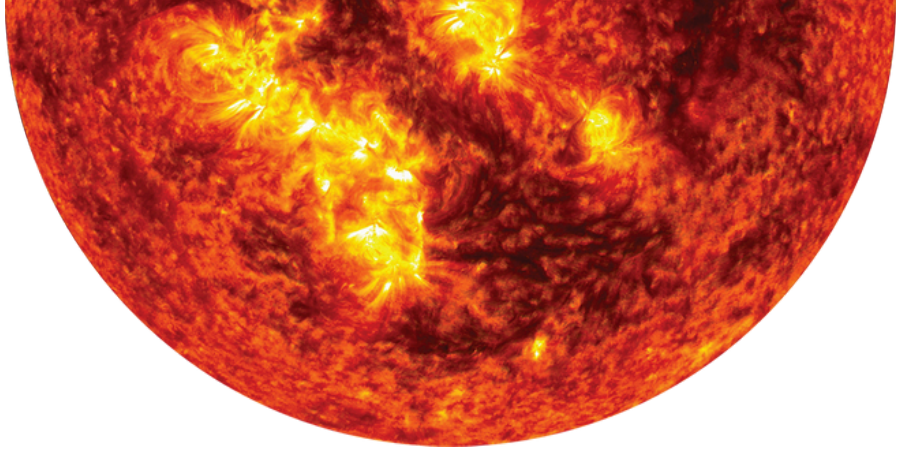
Sea Soul



BEACHCOMBERFX



**STANDING  
STILL** LETTING GO  
FINDING LIGHT



## An Introduction to Standing Still\*

An ancient story tells us that the first humans noticed the world getting darker and darker as they approached the first winter solstice. They declared;

*Woe to us! Because we have caused shame, the world darkens around us, and returns to its formlessness and chaos. This is the death to which Heaven has sentenced us!*

They fasted and prayed for eight days as the longest night approached and then when they noticed that after it the days continued and the light grew longer they said,

*This is the order of the world*

The Winter Solstice is celebrated around the world in different ways. Many of these celebrations include acknowledging pain and regret and looking forward to the future. It is also a time of celebration of light over the darkness.

*What came into existence was Life,  
and the Life was Light to live by.  
The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness;  
the darkness couldn't put it out.*

\*The word *solstice* comes from the Latin words for sun and stopped. It literally means the sun stands still.

We stand at the shortest day, marked by winters chill and long dark nights, summer days a distant memory. We stand today knowing that days will become longer, hope reawakening, as we anticipate spring.

**Refrain: As we stand still on the edge of the shortest day,  
we stand with the origin of creation.**

As we stand still on this shortest day  
As we share this present tick of short days and long nights  
As we sense our standing within creation

We are not the centre  
We are not the focus  
We are not the strong

We come with memories of burgeoning buds  
We come with memories of warmer days  
We come with memories of falling leaves  
We come with memories of those we have walked alongside

**Refrain: As we stand still on the edge of the shortest day,  
we stand with the origin of creation.**

*silence*

We come with the burdens of those we love  
We come with worries we have held on to  
We come with guilt and shame that wrack our demeanour  
We come with grief of those we have loved and lost  
We come with our humanity gathered here with friend and stranger.

*silence*

***Refrain: As we stand still on the edge of the shortest day,  
we stand with the origin of creation.***

# The Yule Log

The Yule or Christmas log has been a tradition celebrated around the winter solstice for 100 years. In European countries there are many variations on what is done with the log but they all include burning it at some point between the winter solstice and the 6th January. Some traditions drag the log through the community as a sign that all of the years misfortune, guilt, shame and regrets are being taken away from that place and burnt away.

Today we invite you to take a piece of card and write down your regrets, pain, guilt, worries and shame. Place the cards in the holes in the log and after we will drag it along the beach. At the end we will set light to the log and burn these reminders of all that we have carried with us this year.

*Throw those curtains wide!  
One day like this a year'd see me right\**



\*From Elbows, One Day Like This

# Stand Still\*

We'er standing here, the days roll on  
**Stand still, stand still and watch and wait**  
The year is past its memories fade  
**Stand Still and watch**

We've regrets that gnaw away  
**stand still, stand still and watch and wait**  
and oft appear, as unwanted gifts  
**Stand still and watch**

We've walked the year, the journey long  
**stand still, stand still and watch and wait**  
Helpfully we've tried our best  
**Stand still and watch**

And as the year closes out  
**stand still, stand still and watch and wait**  
We wait betwixt and in-between  
**Stand still and watch**

Looking ahead we can but dream  
**stand still, stand still and watch and wait**  
Expectant and anxiously  
**stand still and watch**

We look for hope in all we can  
**stand still, stand still and watch and wait**  
Strangers and friends all around us  
**stand still and watch**

\*sang to the tune of Lowlands

# Feasting

The word feast comes from the Latin word *festus* which means joyous. The ancient world feasted often. Christmas wasn't a one day celebration but lasted 12 days from 25th December to the 6th January.

Through out the year there are other times in which people stop to feast and celebrate and to give thanks together. Often these times follow periods of reflection. Christmas is preceded by advent, which originally was a time of reflection and preparation for Christmas. This time included recognising the regrets, pain and guilt accumulated over the year and preparations for the celebration of Christmas.

The reason for feasting after these times was in part a sign of gratitude. When we stop to think of all that has happened, we are often thankful for what we have and what lies ahead. It is also an act of community building as we celebrate the good things life gives us together.

Even in the darkest places the light shines  
today, the hopes and fears of this year  
are gathered together on this the longest night.  
This is not nothing  
it is a sacred something

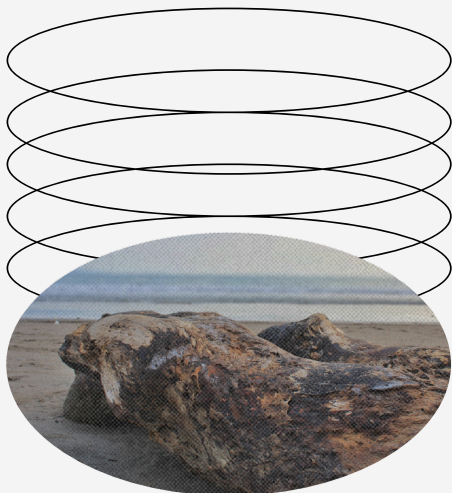
**Refrain: We have stood still,  
We have looked backwards and forwards  
Let us feast together and go  
As we continue to stand with the origin of creation.**





# STANDING STILL

Standing Still has been created  
by Sea Soul and BeachcomberFX



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