

I remember the Paperless Office

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As I sit here and shred, this new year,
Data too private for the recycling,
That has piled up in stacks now, I fear.

I remember the paperless office
Pundits promised in nineteen eight four:
With the advent of personal computers,
Paper will become passé, a bore.

All our data will stay on the screens,
Where we'll read it in comfort and ease;
No more carbons, no filing, no faxes!
Laser printers came: we said, "Yes please!"

I remember the paperless office,
While I sit here and shred my divorce,
Your phone numbers, our medical forms,
Half a chequebook and paystubs, of course.

In the '80s who cared about privacy?
Publish all of your data online,
Make the internet open to all, and
Info heaven will work out just fine.

I remember the paperless office,
As I shred twice as much as before;
Farewell trees, no more capturing carbon,
For your tatters now spill on my floor.

I remember the paperless office
Now my handwriting is just a blur,
After thirty-six years of speed typing,
I can't write songs long-hand any more.

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- Juliet says, "Emily Dickinson would be proud."