

Puzzled

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Two thousand pieces, but who
counts them? Each a puzzle
unto itself, a question of interlocking
limbs and sockets. Each a question
of dependencies, neighbors, rows, and columns.
Colors, shadows, lines, printed hints of a great
whole each piece should fit into—they must fit,
must have a place. But it's too easy
to mistake ground for sky, cloud for castle
wall, and how do you find one bare branch's
place in a stretch of winter forest?
Until the right pieces find their places
these will rattle around the box,
passed over again and again as fingers
comb through, dig in, turn over,
select, inspect, reject.
Start again.
The patience of the piece
rivals the patience of the puzzler, trying
one by one, head to hole, around the
edges of what is already known.