**The Snow Man**

One must have a mind of winter

To regard the frost and the boughs

Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;

And have been cold a long time

To behold the junipers shagged with ice,

The spruces rough in the distant glitter

Of the January sun; and not to think

Of any misery in the sound of the wind,

In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land

Full of the same wind

That is blowing in the same bare place

For the listener, who listens in the snow,

And, nothing himself, beholds

Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.

 —Wallace Stevens

**Snow**

The room was suddenly rich and the great bay-window was

Spawning snow and pink roses against it

Soundlessly collateral and incompatible:

World is suddener than we fancy it.

World is crazier and more of it than we think,

Incorrigibly plural. I peel and portion

A tangerine and spit the pips and feel

The drunkenness of things being various.

And the fire flames with a bubbling sound for world

Is more spiteful and gay than one supposes—

On the tongue on the eyes on the ears in the palms of one’s hands—

There is more than glass between the snow and the huge roses.

 —Louis MacNeice

 **A Piece of the Storm**

*for Sharon Horvath*

From the shadow of domes in the city of domes,

A snowflake, a blizzard of one, weightless, entered your room

And made its way to the arm of the chair where you, looking up

From your book, saw it the moment it landed. That’s all

There was to it. No more than a solemn waking

To brevity, to the lifting and falling away of attention, swiftly,

A time between times, a flowerless funeral. No more than that

Except for the feeling that this piece of the storm,

Which turned into nothing before your eyes, would come back,

That someone years hence, sitting as you are now, might say:

*It’s time. The air is ready. The sky has an opening.*

 —Mark Strand

 **Once in a Lifetime, Snow**

 *for Chris and Mary Sharah*

Winters at home brought wind,

black frost and raw

grey rain in barbed-wire fields,

but never more

until the day my uncle

rose at dawn

and stepped outside—to find

his paddocks gone,

his cattle to their hocks

in ghostly ground

and unaccustomed light

for miles around.

And he stopped short, and gazed

lit from below,

and half his wrinkles vanished

murmuring *Snow*.

A man of farm and fact

he stared to see

the facts of weather raised

to a mystery

white on the world he knew

and all he owned.

Snow? Here? he mused. I see.

High time I learned.

Here, guessing what he meant

had much to do

with that black earth dread old men

are given to,

he stooped to break the sheer

crust with delight

at finding the cold unknown

so deeply bright,

at feeling it take his prints

so softly deep,

as if it thought he knew

enough to sleep,

or else so little he

might seek to shift

its weight of wintry light

by a single drift,

perceiving this much, he scuffed

his slippered feet

and scooped a handful up

to taste, and eat

in memory of the fact

that even he

might not have seen the end

of reality . . .

Then, turning, he tiptoed in

to a bedroom, smiled,

and wakened a murmuring child

and another child.

 —Les Murray