

Second and Third Snow

After I wrote
“First Snow”
I wanted to speak of the
second and third,
to praise them also
but acknowledge sooner or later
we moan and grumble ‘not again?’
A period ensues
through which we trudge
along in the cold rain and slush.

But what about the Eskimos?
They make love to the snow
all year long
and the Nigerians
probably have only
heard of it or
see it from afar on mountaintops.

Agh—my poem is not universal!
Well, maybe it would only be
vague and general then.

Instead, consider the snow in
January or February, say, when it
isn’t going away,
is a daily fact of life,
a hazard and hindrance
if still a brilliant one
particularly when the sun’s out
the entire surface of the
earth is a white mirror of the sun.

What then?
And when it turns to slush
and is merely a treacherous mess?

*How can we only speak of
the first snow,
that romantic interlude,
and leave it at that?*

The second and the third
and the leavings
are more often
where we are.

Times less magical, it seems.
Times indoors.
Doors in time
and rooms behind
in which there is a chair.
You sit on it and wait.
Perhaps a boil arises.
Perhaps not.
What then?

I must be getting old.
Who wants to praise the second
or the third snow?
And the way it hangs on?

But if we only can enjoy
the romantic interludes,
wait for lightning or the first snow
and other such-like big things
then maybe we've failed
the rest of the time.
Which is most of the time.

Certainly there are more
failures in a lifetime than victories.
Still, though, you gotta like it
when the imagination melts
the second and third snows of the mind,

or not and is as cold as any winter day
and makes its own snow out of a sky
of the weather of the mind
or what's between us.

Also, the way the second and the third endure,
hang on like there's no tomorrow—
who would not endure with the implacable
strength of a northern winter?

Perhaps to endure with the sunny perseverance
of the Caribbean is more preferable—
but you take my point—

there is more strength of endurance
in the second or third snow than in the first
though less drama.

Of course, endurance can be simply a cop-out
as when people say of a nasty situation they're in
“this will pass” too much. Life itself
will end—but what about the meantime?

We're in the meantime most of the time.
The usual notion of a ‘story’ doesn't often apply.
Does that make it unwritable?
No, or we've missed most of our life,
the scheme of it overall and the micro
of the moment.

So I want to praise the second and the third snow
even though I eventually wish Spring would hurry up.

