Winter Sonnets By G. H. Mosson

Winter Still Life

Leaves of grass slumber all day in ice. Wood skeletons crackle atop rooftops. Pines are stucco'd in cubes of crystal. A willow is freighted with glass wires. Nothing moves until twilight ignites over and over this still-birth of ice, as a boy walks his mutt and yearns for unborn poetry he burns to forge. Armored branches unleash ice-chinks; pitch-black arrives to bursting chimes. Only the breakage flashes this ice-world is passage. Frigid winds will slacken, releasing trees from their encasement to rustle beneath January's low sun.

Hidden Sun

As earth slips this metal settlement toward nuclear fire, its residents unclam from dreams, while a dome of mucus clings above the trees. People ping to consciousness—sparks in darkness. Houses globe yellow. Causeways dawn. Cars slosh through tubulars of fog, seeking commerce, spraying run-off, sloughing last night to make it new. Streets of mop water—world is wombed. Yet the blocked sky is pregnant with iridescence. Sun looms, strobes stronger. The swaddling of gray shatters to plates of puff. Now, behind white hills: standing wave of blue slabs bluing.

First Snowfall

An old Victorian towers over its court of evergreens, and a curved road where cars blow through—so stately as wind ushers leaves to dirt. But when the household awoke to snowfall, pines were wreathed in white staccato, overarched by blue ice.

In snow-clothed dawn, none could recall their world. So in the white-out of sudden tundra, driveways are culled, families forge snowmen.

Loners trek drifts. Crows gyre.

Low snow moves. And then—in the dusk quietude—a million miniature pat-downs. By my door are bird-prints where

stairs of ice boa around

a blade of grass

striving toward light.

Burial of Snow Storms

Snowstorms machine-gun humans into homes, entomb them with just awareness of the world. They rise to their tasks, but the bombardment continues. At night, each recycles their blocked day, and in dream, lives bloom. At 2 a.m., a sunflower flops to earth, sowing secrets people must forget. Storms shake walls, swaying humans like the ocean mothers ferns. On the third night, it just slurs. Early dawn risers toe doorsteps, licking lips, tasting a crisp cool core of cut quartz. This exotic oxygen from afar beads on the tongue like something clean. Winds rise contrary. Houses are gardens.

Transformation at Night

Onslaught of ice storms sledge into evening, shedding shards in scythe-sweeps slicing skins. Trees squirrel essences to a still-point, lining the streets—black calligraphies—as whirls of white waterfall upon them, and they are gone. A wind arcs, howls

hoarfrost: It spears the ground, geysering upward, then hovers as snowy spinning fists, but strands disband revealing a breeze. Night withdraws to the level of houses, releasing a black aerosol, which feathers onto combs of barren trees smoking to color out of the receding void. When it came to light, people peeled back doors and smelt mint.

Ice and Light

Ice-sheathed streets catch the pre-dawn. It flickers through like schools of minnows, through the calculus of an industrial city, houses so empty as people puddle in dream. Nightwind had carved curbside snowdrifts into icy cradles, which cup to brittle cliffs splintered on top. A rising sun hits these tips, vivifying pinnacles to constellation. At the level of doorsteps is a light-web tight as concentration, fine as guitar notes. Then the city yearns into a vast exhale of gold. Runners shoe-up. But for one last instant, streets are pierced by a god charioteering earth to the world.

February Melting

I was astonished by fat roles of mud, black and fertile as slippery shit. Vines of ivy threaded it. Spades of olive slit the frosted, runny slope and surfaced with the glow of fireflies. An exodus of thriving life revealed passion beneath months of mute, cold white. Each leaf unscrolled a topography of that drive: burst from seed, surging as vine, risen to testify on a bed of black sludge, rich as genitals, glinting like coin. What must steam beneath ice. . . . We have been wrong about flowering and deflowering. None have even glimpsed the precoming. Astronomers have yet to see the beginning.

Winter Rainfall

As snowflakes slush to raindrops, people pause on corners, watching liquid bullets puncture miniature mountains of snow. Some listen to succession of incisions ensue secession of winter's chrysalis.

It busts. Cars wheel out and chomp it up. Shoppers swarm and stomp the inky gunk. We crush the world to recognize it. Hillocks slacken to scaffolds of ice-bars; water within gushes back and forth. Ice pipes untaut—crash to puddles of stacked shards. At dusk, jays brook this glittering marsh, reinhabiting sunset; they pause on platinum, cratered with diamonds.

The Larger World

Jason walks through a fine fuzz of spruces on a membrane of slim aquatic explosions, air a booze of dreaming amoebas misting white and blue; and soon his lungs ingest the svelte pelt of chilled oxygen, and he's pulled into raindrops rushing. All around arises a swift silent multitude, sounding solely through collision—and he listens to vast echoes of distance within this brash clash of raining, wonders why he's walking to anything, stops, then feels so cold he's shivering. Wet oblongs crash on a vegetable bed primed to attention as Douglas Firs pant *Douglas Fir Douglas Fir....*

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