

SNOW LIGHT

Even in the north
we're moved to announce "It's snowing!"
with a certain inflection, a hint of something
beyond the fact. No strangers to snow,
Viking born and furred to the teeth, we live
with it for months, intimate as lovers,
faithful as hooded high priests at old rituals.

Fragments of frozen water-- no mystery in that.
Yet we stare transcendent, watching
its vagaries, versifying its forms.

Streaking horizontal across window
and horizon, how can there be any on the ground?
Dropping vertical and deliberate,
how can anything so heavy be so silent?

Some of us have begun to suspect. Snow is
the ghost of something. Not summer or youth
or things obvious. More likely the plasm
of what we don't know, didn't discover, failed
to follow when we glimpsed it sidewise. It flew
across the parallax for an instant, triggered
dormant sensors, discreetly hidden sweat glands.

We never learned its identity. So it keeps coming
back with a common alias. Beauty we recognize.
Cold that can kill. Frigid force able to crack
our bricks, crash our roofs, bury us.

Maybe there are answers in this wild whiteness,
before earth's soil claims it, before deadness
defiles it. There is a presence here.
The sky is grave dark, storms whip and wheeze.
But look at the light. The snow light.