

YELLOWKNIFE OUTPOST, ALASKA

Jim's breath is shattered glass, deep in his lungs.
Aurora glow, sleet-darts, an Arctic wind
Affix him to the ladder's topmost rungs.
Their radio's in trouble, signals thinned.
Their main antenna's blown and bent askew.
They sent a younger member of the crew
To make the icy climb but he slipped down;
He dropped the tools in snow, his jaw was skinned.
That numbing metal! Hands undisciplined,
Jim trains the frigid unit toward the town.
Below, they yell to keep his spirits up.

Repairs now done, reception's loud and clear.
It takes some time to raise his coffee cup--
The time it takes his throat to thaw and cheer.