

THE ROAD ALREADY TAKEN

The house is designed for haunting,
three towering stories of Gothic overkill
presiding over the dynasty behind me.

The access road, ideal for jogging,
bears my family name, my father's
and grandfather's footprints, and his father's.

My running shoes plunge through autumn snow,
my hurry makes an intaglio trail.
Not the same as those pioneer imprints on bedrock

and subsoil and most of my waking ideas.
I should have passed all three
gray granite icons by now.

My lip turns wryly: My late sires
didn't have custom-made soles and air magic.
Hell, the old founder had a limp.

New snow floats on the bias of light.
On my left, the river is quietly opaque,
striated by kids on skis and sleds,

stippled with animal crossings. I turn right
where the grade rises in cake-icing whitescapes,
eye-aching pristine, waiting for tracks.

Steady motion clears my head of old metaphors.
Idle ironies settle in their place.
Only snowfall makes me a pathfinder.

Fatigue rides my legs. The scion
should get home before dark. People expect me.
I look back at the huge chimney of native stone.

The road bears no trace of my presence.

--G. R. Holloway