

First Snow

Winter has ways of happening
in the night when you sleep dreaming

of clear highways in the morning,
of ice-free days getting you through.

But in darkness the snow begins
falling finally on the fields

too long uncovered to blue cold,
on plant roots frozen too deeply,

on cities caught in a gray freeze,
and nerves jumping in exposure.

When you awake to windows glazed
with the sharp light of winter's sun,

look out to the stuff of legends
and rabbit tracks as soft as breath,

you curse getting to work, traffic,
bumper to bumper radios,

until you hear in the distance
that old man with a crown and staff

chiding his servant boy, trailing
his cloak over the loveliness

of the finally fallen snow
laying deep and crisp and even.

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