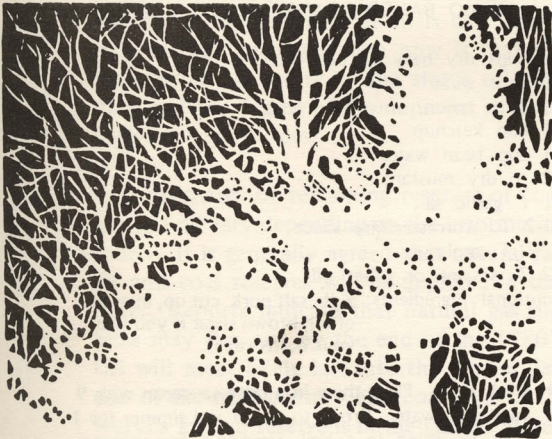


Two Winter Poems

Dale Hobson



Cold Spell

February mornings, it's death
Outside the door, twentyfive below.
The teawater's frozen in the kettle.
The dogs breath floats in puffs
Above the hearthrug and crystallizes on the window.

This small corner room is rich with frost.
The windows are shot with frostlines
Like sketches of the constellations,
And all around my bed the clear air pops
With flakes of snow that sifted
Through the warpings of the sash.

Precious time - to be alone -
And drowse upon the beauty of this life.
The empty wastepaper basket is brimming
With sunlight as I linger half-awake
And half in dream, tasting
All the perfect worlds between.

Solo

On winter evenings,
After a day of snow
And the wind has blown
Itself up into drifts;
Watching the changing tide of light
Drain from windows and radiate to space;
How we give ourselves up, in pieces,
Thought chasing thought like fireflies
From a ruptured Chinese lantern
That wink and vanish in all directions.

The cold is at the source,
Echoing in an oceanscape of snow -
In the chill of imagination
That sees in the darkening blue sky
An extension of itself, stretched like a parasol -
A coldness of the interior
Numbing toward skin.

In the chill of imagination
The mind pours out into drifting sinks of shadow,
Peopling the dark by amputation,
Molding the wind-whistle
Into answering skeins of speech.

The soul dances in its own arms
On winter nights.
Failure at the source
Is failure at the source
And celebrates alone.

Shedding humanness,
Lacking love,
The soul sings of stellar distances,
Envisions itself a ship between worlds,
Streaking unseen through silence,
A single thought moving
In a single direction.

The soul dances in its own arms
After the wind has blown itself out
And the stars shine hard
Like military buttons.
It sings precisely of itself.