

Words for Winter  
2025

*fig. press*





Thomas Campion  
*Now Winter Nights Enlarge*

Now winter nights enlarge  
    This number of their hours;  
And clouds their storms discharge  
    Upon the airy towers.  
Let now the chimneys blaze  
    And cups o'erflow with wine,  
Let well-tuned words amaze  
    With harmony divine.  
Now yellow waxen lights  
    Shall wait on honey love  
While youthful revels, masques, and courtly sights  
    Sleep's leaden spells remove.

his time doth well dispense  
    With lovers' long discourse;  
Much speech hath some defense,  
    Though beauty no remorse.  
All do not all things well:  
    Some measures comely tread,  
Some knotted riddles tell,  
    Some poems smoothly read.  
The summer hath his joys,  
    And winter his delights;  
Though love and all his pleasures are but toys  
    They shorten tedious nights.

Jacey Anderson  
*To See Winter*

To see winter like the child  
whose mother announces,  
"Oh darling, *look!*  
Do you see them?  
Snowdrops—"  
Whose words remove my hood,  
gently guiding our attention  
to tiny beads of light beneath snow,  
hung on swirling lantern stalks,  
I was briefly too grown to see.

*First Snow Tradition*

barefoot, slip  
into silver silence,  
a secret brush with frostbite.

Dan Beachy-Quick

*Palinode*

for Gabrielle Calvocoressi

Hawk, lord. Heron, lord. Kingfisher,  
lord. Earthworm, serf. Pill bug  
in August. The long rain all autumn.  
The new song hatches out the old.  
Spring mists. Firefly. Mosquito.  
Before there was the world there was  
the humming-bird. Hawk, serf.  
Heron, serf. Kingfisher, serf. Lord  
earthworm. & Lord beetle.

Chloe Bliss Snyder  
*Her Red Hair*

unhurried or rather unwintered  
even at solstice I said

I admire your fire  
pit commitment  
to night friends my friend she said

I love the beer and the dark talk  
the hearth unwallled as in childhood  
snowy owls beat silently our side and I

said my friend how I see  
December's in your head

Shannon Castor  
*Grianstad*

Bunratty echo from a chimney embering peat,  
orangebeam  
early night, sagging, the spine of a springing heifer  
sound of weaning between pastures, Dexter-  
Limousine  
breed, the Atlantic mapped, green lichened grykes  
and through the turlough, limping stock  
tapped on the back, a herd of hide jackets  
bowed to the weather, Eoin and his father John  
cinching the hail from rushing up their sleeves, sun  
stop  
Grianstad, headlamp Hi-Viz the haze of morning  
fog searing a melancholy inside the throat

Martin Corless-Smith  
*On leaving my mother at Crewe Station*  
from *Bitter Green*

The bough the bird is on  
A bitter winter dialect  
Writ grey across the white  
Somewhere in the copse is green

Somewhere underneath this scene  
A summer stirs a spring  
I've been thru so many winters  
Will never see the like again

As with an apple for dessert  
Its ordinariness sublime  
I'm at a loss this day  
To find another winter equal in my mind

*[Enter a chorus of festival singers]*

*from The Fool and the Bee*

And the narwhal hangs from the Christmas tree  
And the blue glass fish and the Chinese bird  
And the wooden house with no one in  
And I who hang them there beneath

And I'm lay down in a nest of needles  
Pine sweat gluing wool and hair  
And only wind to call me after  
Rain and soon another year

Ben Friedlander  
*Thinking of Bethlehem*

I took a breath.  
It was a gift

the sky allowed  
I might enjoy.

Holding fast  
by habit alone:

bare branches  
cradle snow.

D Kopec  
*call out the instigator*

christmas eve jurassic park;  
on this special night of course everything is on  
the fritz  
and john hammond is alone. he is eating all  
the ice cream  
in the food court mostly because the temp  
regulation system  
has failed  
and everything is melting; smoking  
a cigarette outside, he feeds a spongebob pop  
to a friendly compsognathus.

*haiku for star, idaho*

old backyard fire pit  
the first sundowns of winter  
you burn in my hands

Lethe  
*the magpie*

what a miracle it is  
when the january sun blazes  
to drink the blue snow shadows  
and to follow them home  
hoping their pale energies  
which congregate sweetly at noon  
turn the sky a peach  
so when i run past midnight  
i am dreaming of softness

Ellie Snyder

*A Bald Eagle Wakes After a Snowstorm*

Shakes the bright hood from her white head  
Lifts the breaking blanket from her wings  
The nest beneath her breast is warm  
She snows into the biting white sky

Elanor Spring  
*A Real Winter*

snow secret  
is light's name  
which brings it  
warm a little  
longer and so  
the quiet hand  
covers the tree's  
trembling sleeve  
reaching our most  
beautiful love, o  
please go out  
to meet it

Keaton Studebaker  
*O, Freaky Friday Before Christmas*

At dawn they swap: Scrooge jammed in  
Ralphie's woolen coat,  
grumbling "bah, BB-gunbug" as he jolts  
the lamp's live wire.

He curses at the furnace like the Old  
Man gulping soot,

yet feels his frosty heart thaw fast at  
sparks of childish fire  
while Ralphie wakes in Scrooge's chair,  
short-pantsed and keen to quote  
"future earnings" as his pitch for every  
toy desire.

Then Marley drifts in, baffled by this pint-sized, penny-pinched dispute:

“Kid, swaps are messy—ghosts don’t get overtime,” he wheezes.

Each life turns strange; Scrooge finds joy won’t balance any ledger’s loot,

and Ralphie learns that spreadsheets chill more than spirits’ breezes—

till both switch back by supper, wiser!

Charlotte Suttee  
*Of Brazil's winter*

Solstice, in  
    your crumpled up blanket  
wishes you your wings

Granted  
your wings are lily-white  
    with views:  
        the little

Green leaves  
    are never gone

Adam Ray Wagner  
*for Geraldine Monk*

winter skewn  
snowflake skies  
swerve to skein-reality

*Played on a keyboard*

I love Christmas  
time the way it  
slips outside  
& crinkles  
o so  
a little  
light

Lena Walker  
*for Pakapon*

Call it steam or smoke  
Call to tell me  
It's happening  
Indifference is undoing of language  
We're confusing  
Is it speaking  
When mouths hang in midair?

The whole world gets in on a moment of  
quiet  
Half moon stamped over Bangkok  
Looked like your heel print in the snow

Matt Wood  
*Ballad*

From ethylene to breath a charm  
once humic hardens heard through thaw  
a crystalline pitch buried in this herm-  
eneutics of the snow.