



so-called weather

JJ Rowan

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Locofo Chaps is dedicated to publishing politically-oriented poetry.

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Solitude within multitude seduced me early. -- Denise Levertov

i.

in which we wait for the stick,
stuck fingers making slow

work of work. the music is
easy the claws are out to

barely reach a couple layers
of skin. you clutter your life

your life massively declutter(s)
itself you sit among other folks

and other folks' clutter it feels
nice

in another poem by Denise
Levertov you read about clouds

but the poem isn't really about
clouds or is exactly about clouds

the way this poem is exactly about
snow: talking about it doesn't feel

the same it doesn't fall the
same it falls exactly the same

...

in the bookstore you remember
what it feels like to be in a book-

store it's that simple. the snow
falls outside but doesn't stick yet

or feel the same they're not the
same

books but you're not the same

you, you who felt the sharpness
of

knowledge pierce your ability

to read spines, literary or

otherwise,

it wasn't put upon you to be

timid but it was reinforced

it was valued
it was suggested that
to be timid was to be both
supportive & small

to be the tiny strong thing

not really and you feed a
thousand memories of snow

welled up behind your eyes and
in the parts of your bones which

truly feel the depth of cold. the
books don't smell the same

"into the stress of the uni-
verse -- now" or some other

punctuation Adrienne has to
offer off her page the woman

at any age inadvertently rhyming
and sometimes able to spell the

streets: a spell cast under cover
of the only perhaps day as

far as warnings go. i wasn't
able to stand it by which

i mean i didn't have to: i stood
in the snow by which i mean

couldn't stop walking. the wind
killed my kind place broke

open a whooosh sort of feeling
moving through threat of wire

/ bone, whichever might
first present itself, or last,

last an ease of line mostly
not looking backward &

which sits quietly behind

you

as you boom

...

mean months actually, better

parts of years better and

yet more fertile frozen inches,

down feet even, better parts of

numbers better and more

useful, that is until someone

applies them as they apply to

you, you, slow visitor, sometime

traveler here to reach the floor

the floor of you, wicked you the

certainly looking out the win-
dow
in another memory of mak-
ing paper objects for the ultimate

purpose of molding in a
basement from which you wrote

publishable letters and likely
unpublishable ones, too

...

it isn't delicate anymore to
write the poem, pieces falling

nearly floating into place over
an extended period of time i

ii.

in which we unstick first grace-
fully and then increasingly

in need of dirt. i failed finding your
letter. the life of letters the way a letter

/ both symbol and say / the
way i've held letters i hold onto

the single scrape: a love letter,
a long letting you go, in which i

am let and you are go.
i am go-
ing in the usual unusual way

forward into a slurry wherein
the various forms of water are

wild, you the overwrought

and burnt, what

didn't show up on your skin or
in your voice or in your lack
of voice or in the growling
which replaces your voice

when you really start to chip

& closes or if we're lucky
it only closes

off: fell off the format a minute

fell off the earth for maybe

one out of five minutes

...

the true deep winter brought w/
it

another lecture, another way
to draw out the line to meet

the particular requirements of
the arbitrary. so i arbitrate

a singular office a wordly voca-
tion through a thick glass still

not thick enough. oh that glass
could bend. oh that the snow

would explain you away.

...

we get easy together it's ugly and
sometimes slick the ground

it's slick too but that's all relative to
how you hold your feet under you

or otherwise

it's wise to be care-
ful it's caring to be whole the hole

left lingers though it's free to
use the door it becomes the door

so the funding of woman bodies has
been canceled in the foreseeable future

woman bodies will be can-
celed too. if you see such a body

vivid dreams of yours and

your imaginary future: your
possibility,

your none of my business & so

for a moment the

poem becomes vile with longing
&

then empties itself into the

quiet moment & all the loud
ones which follow.

there is still snow on the
ground

as though anything is regular

and/or predictable

...

or perhaps the day is always
suspect so

we tell the story

on the ground don't pick her up if you
want her to be accepted back

into the nest if the nest knows
what you've done no funding will

ever but also already. once woman
bodies are completely kicked out of

capital can we truly be free?
please
invite me to be vile & unfunded,
wild & methodless, a mountain

without the explanation of the
landscape approaching it if i

am the land you are certain-
ly not the sky i am the sky

also

...

the crust of snow is hunkering
down, a discernible green

persisting some places. i feel
enormous by which i mean

seeable by which i mean i am
blurry-eyed against the cold but

i am not against the cold i am
with it / i am it / i carry it with me

it is still day but it is still snow but
snow which subtracts snow, ice

whittled by itself, a hop up the
sidewalk on the unsuspecting day

the story's way we wake up,

bleed with normalcy onto

a thick pale snow

we know the difference btwn

slick & freeze &

the variations therein contained

also we recognize each other
in the deep crust
of the earth which presents
itself as the impostor *weather*

whether or not you believe me

i am myself, and moreso

i am present, and moreso

i am bleeding into the great

horizon, bloodying every snow

iii.

in which we stuck no matter, we
took the weather to our bodies

a tender parent of precipitation
wanting for a check-up checks up

on your dailies, look down on
your years. make me an angel

sing to yrself in the quiet crowd.
you hide behind a piece of glass

hid behind a piece of paper.
neither wins. no one's seeking.

the thing about snow is you're
relentlessly in plain sight

to be made in snow that i might
be remembered for a moment or

two.

i rode in a couple's
vehicle to the singular cem-

tary.

so.

just so.

we park our rigs in us
that we might be whole

a hole in the ground, feet un-
accustomed to any variation

that we might vary, that we
might be varied, that we

might

otherwise

more wet than working, how

a change of guard / a change

of ability / but not actually

how certain words always

get soft in yr mouth / even

when you bite down

carry the cold deep in your

teeth

wake up

biting a stone

crack into yrself a shell

the soft center not softer than

any given day

waning or waxing:

see age, the stubborn plaster

i was known to sink into the sink-
able ground, further dust than
dirt, more ink than stain

unstuck

from the human form

i stab my human form into itself
to no end
/ to no avail

...

snow becomes the deep wet ground on
which dying holds claim to

what was, and is, barely. barely pre-
sent, barely powerful slick anymore

do you stick to yrself or melt in-
to the very ground which holds you

but not which holds you up: a body
is in charge of its own upright

a self, white with too many
silent afternoons, this white
fucking world goddamn
its insistence
of a singular body saying

say so into the un-iced dirt

say so out of the kindling

already on fire but not yet

burned up / away / or even
lit

...

when you talk about burning

you've set yourselves

& not each other

but you each bear witness to

despite the gravity which holds
it down, not the science

the grave, i mean: where did our
salt get in with our savory

/ shld we have known the
difference / shld we have

care(d)

the poem, perhaps, has
ended itself the last shades of

dirty ices shave themselves away
& soon the memory of crystal:

the ground won't even remem-
ber itself where a powder

ground unfamiliar, somehow
still green in the wake of it-

self

the other's flame

you measure its peaks

for quiet greatness

& still a word endures

w/ a stink on it

so we hold the other's nose
for the haul

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