

## Coming to Terms

I remember standing at the window  
watching the snow fall slowly  
through the afternoon.

It was one of those April snows  
we used to get in Pittsburgh  
before America went to hell.

I'd just returned from spilling  
my parents' ashes in the Llano River  
behind their house, probably  
an act of *thanagogic* vandalism  
of a municipal water supply  
but who's to know?

And watching the snowflakes  
melt as fast as they hit the sidewalk,  
I felt a bit *ghostalgic*, a word  
I may have invented  
for that occasion to mark  
a feeling of nostalgia

for another world, the one  
we came from and will return to,  
and also the feeling of affection  
for the dead, at least for  
my mother, a kind and wise  
woman who subtly saved me

from my father, a cruel vain man  
whom I've come to accept  
genuinely despised me.  
But I didn't hate or dislike him  
instead I *disloved* him, feeling  
an intense disappointment

at his limitations, opportunities  
for love being so few in this life.  
And as each snowflake fell  
on the sidewalk immediately  
disappearing as if meant  
to live only in the air, of the air,

I was feeling *astralgic*, a sadness  
for the stars that died  
billions of years ago

whose light we see now,  
a homesickness for a cosmos  
that no longer exists.

There is no lasting happiness  
in this world, only  
particles of happiness,  
fleeting, unpredictable,  
transitory as a fragrance  
or a falling leaf or a glance

from a passerby on the street,  
a plain person, hardly noticeable  
who slips through our dreams  
like a cat through shadows  
changing us in ways  
we never wanted to be changed.