The Snow

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First Communion

Little Jeeses and Marys walked past me this morning
And I loved them with a pure and clear and phony love
For in my mind I pinned them there on the church aisle floor
Innocent of kicking younger brothers and sisters
And of nagging ragged mothers to satisfy their greed
And innocent of growing up to be father’s sons and mother’s daughters

I took their flanneled whiteness and put it on their souls
And made believe they loved the one that they received
I wished and didn’t hope and desired and didn’t pray
That they would love and honor and glory him in such a way
That they would share his silent smile and know his quiet love
And pass along those rare-trod paths

Those beastly little children will spit upon his bloody face
Just as you and I have done from ages past.
They’ll mock that serene and loving gaze
With no more wit than we have yet devised
And in the end, like us some crawl into his arms.

Anonymous

The Snow

I love it when it’s like that.
So fine, slow, quiet, undisturbed.
It’s humble. It’s modest.
It comes when one is
Not looking, as if it would hide.
It works in secret,
In still, wintery night, shadows.
Not familiar with its tricks,
One is caught at unawares:
“Why didn’t you say you were coming?
Next time. I will stand at my window
And admire you, humble
Whiteness. I love you like this.’’

I love to watch the snow steal to earth at night;
I like to think it is performing just for me—
That everyone in the world is asleep
And only I notice its splendor. I know its
Tricks now. It can’t fool me. When I arise tomorrow morn,
I will not be surprised. “I saw you first;
I know you came (I watched you) and I will not be
Surprised.

—PHIL PARISI