

SNOW OVERNIGHT – STEPHEN ROXBURGH LONGWILL

Slow, soft, and soundless the snowflakes sink down;
Now everything is slow like them: people
Stumble awkwardly over slippery
Patches, like flat-footed penguins.
Grass, paths, steps are smoothly sloping
In soft curves and spreading into one;
There are no longer stones, earth, plants,
But only one whiteness that hurts the eyes.
There is no sound: the world is like a
Clock that has stopped, whose ticking is not
Noticed until it is not there.
Slow, soft, soundless,
And lonely.

The snow entangles trees, twists their
Knotty unevenness into smoothness,
Merges them with all the other white,
Save where the great red winter sun
Tinges their topmost branches with warm pink.
The snow is everywhere, enveloping the
Trees with a white net,
And hanging the twigs of bushes with snow cobwebs.

A few people shovel snow or throw snowballs,
But they are like intruders in another world,
A world slow, soft, soundless,
And lonely.