

nothing special on a night in february

by Anthony M. Powers

tuesday morning, 12:32 a.m.
sewer water trickled along
underneath the lonely half-frozen blacktop.
the february air was still,
not even a whisper of a breeze
brave enough to speak out
over the crunch crunch crunching
of the thin layer of ice
beneath
the thin layer of snow
beneath
my feet.

a low-hanging branch brushed across my face
and somewhere behind me
a screen door squeaked
effortlessly.

as i stepped out to cross west 163rd,
the grey, icy sludge in the road
looked almost like ballpark mustard
illuminated by the streetlights,
and it felt like walking through a recently emptied movie theater.

no stars to be seen in the sky tonight.

i couldn't feel the cold,
but pulled the collar of my pea-coat up around my neck anyway

because i liked the way it looked.

i glanced over my shoulder, but there was still no one there.

and as i made the next half a block to my parent's house
i started seeing ghosts,
and one said
"you've done this to yourself,"
but i kept quiet and kept on
because she wasn't really there.

i kept my head down until i reached the front steps
and saw all the icicles
flowing over from the gutters
that hadn't been cleaned in only god knows how long,
and i reached up and grabbed one of the thicker ones,
but only half came off
and i knew if i pulled too hard
i could bring the whole damn thing down,
so i tossed it into the yard and gave
one last look around
before going inside.

i wondered if there was enough ice on the house
to cause the roof to cave in.

my room was on the second floor.

