

I'm Dreaming of a Nihilistic Christmas

by John Olson

The mind sparkles with Shakespeare. It's like hearing the rain fall. The world becomes silent and dark and the rain becomes snow and falls like snow and rests on the ground like snow and informs the mind with the values of heaven. A distant oboe pins its sympathies to a tapestry of shadows. Apparitions embarrass reality with their erotic parodies. A streetlight confesses its tragedies to a bus stop. There are no more buses this evening. The bus is in a ditch. Everything is photogenic and slower than usual. It's because the snow is slow and makes everything else slow. It fills the air with a graceful languor. It is so slow it slows in its slowness to catch a simile. It is as a gynecologist preparing a Pap smear. And when it is finished falling everything looks the same powdered white and ghostly. It affects all things real or imaginary it makes no difference. Chimeras require exact change rendered in braided cents for their services as a medium of transport. No other money will do. Because money is fundamentally idiotic. And the sky mints a coinage of snow. Which is ataxia. There is no utility to snow. There is no purpose to snow. The snow has no goal. And the streetlight is eloquent. And Shakespeare arrives at the bus stop. He waits for a carriage of gold. Three old women show him their tarantula. He admires the tarantula, which is named Juliet. And when the carriage arrives he bids them a fond farewell and climbs aboard and rides to the moon behind four white swans. And the world is left to its own resources. And looks like a Christmas card. But it is a failed Christmas card. It has no uplifting message. It simply rides on a planet that spins in perpetual motion. That rolls into the dark. That rolls into the cold. Carrying effusion and maple. Camellias and bottles and people with their heads bowed on tables. And the calm is so total that a cat can't hear it. This cosmos dripping with appearance. With a music gouged

out of calculus. With emotions whose noise amounts to a sock against the skin. Dripping with mind. Because the mind needs meaning. And there is no meaning. The snow is not an answer. The snow is simply snow. Flake upon flake. Like word against word. Meaning nothing. You might say wool. And it means nothing. Wool means wool. And suddenly there is something made of nothing. There is wool. Pressed against the skin. Which is the stuff of kings. Which is a sparkle on the neck. Which is decibels of wrist. This density of snow, these shapes lost to the air.

