

From Above the North Pole

Christopher J. Patton
January 1968

The cold wind blows out of the North.
Biting fury,
Chilling whiplash,
Blustering strikes from behind.

Roaring, "Turn your face! Coward!"

Brown leaves,
Dead leaves,
Flung far from barren branches;
Daring leaves,
Fleeing leaves,
Tossed before the snow.
Nerves racing,
Blood coursing,
Warning of creeping cold.

"Turn your face! Turn your face!"

Muscles flex;
Hairs stand,
Fighting freezing wind.
Driven snow,
Frozen rain,
Chasing life before it.

"Turn your face! I'm the North Wind!"

Exciting chill,
Valiant wind,
Brings hard its snow and ice.
Freezing dirt,
Hardened clod,
Form barren earth with sullen inmates.

"Turn your face! Turn!"

Whipping wind,
Probing wind,
Once set in; stays in.
Falling flakes,
Flying leaves,
Unloosed by Northern wind.

"Turn your face! You remain!"

Mighty wind,
Exciting cold,
Flows through bones like lightning.

"You remain! Turn! You remain!"

Horrid wind,
Killing wind,
Burning turned face.
Reddening face,
Withering face,
Warped by waxing fury.

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Northern fury,
Driving wind,
Pushes 'gainst face's motion.

Whistling, "Fool, you turned! I'm the North!"

Mighty wind,
Fighting wind,
Pushes, then splits blustering by.
Staggered step,
Freezing face,
Face set 'gainst Northern wind.
Pretty snow,
Biting snow,
Covering numbed face.
Noble face,
Striving face,
"Foolishly" turned 'gainst wind of the North:

Mumbling, "I come! I've answered!"

Solid wind,
Freezing wind, blows out of mighty North.
Striving face,
Cracked face,
Lunging for'd steadily.

"Still? Still you stagger?"

Killing wind,
Cruel wind,
Driving snow and all before it.
Kind face,
Battered face,
Ever looking forward.
Frozen face,
Seeking eyes,
Bold with hopeful knowledge...
Foolish fury,
Waning wind,
Allowed for awhile, then tempered.