

The Quiet Beauty- Marcus T. Blake

Snow. The quiet beauty. Heralded by amber and red warnings, she falls with grace, the ground marked with her cold embrace. She quietly sits merely spectating the delight and chaos that surrounds her. Fatefully she's swept away by heat, salt and rain; her memory eternally remains.

As the degrees plummeted to zero, the snow began to fall, it's white tinted orange by the street-light. My bedroom window was small, yet the prolific beauty of the snow captured me. As I opened my eyes the next morning, my whole room was a burning white. I wondered if I was still dreaming or perhaps the bedroom lights were left on, or the sun had begun consuming the earth. As I rose from my bed, I saw that it was the snow glaring from the opposite rooftop and the footpaths bellow. Having nothing else to do, I decided to go on a walk in the snow. I couldn't pass up the opportunity to go, after all when do you find the time to walk in this much snow, especially in England!

As I first set foot in the snow, its stark touch reached my ankles, dampening the fabric on the sides of my boots; I realised that the boots I wore weren't very suitable for this weather. However, I decided to proceed anyway. A wave of exposure washed over me, as I shivered and my face grew cold. My breath felt heavy yet light, clouds of vapour floating and dissipating in the air; I could see my very breath and that this was happening. It was all a reminder of my very existence. As I started walking, all I could hear was the *thump* of my feet stepping through the tenderness of the snow. I crossed a bridge over a canal then paused, gazing over its sleek glistening surface. I envisioned how cool it would be to walk along the frozen surface, maybe even skating along it. Then I imagined how freezing it would be if I fell through the ice. I decided to continue walking, ignoring my fantasy of folly.

Surprisingly, I found myself walking at a swift pace, often overtaking other pedestrians on the footpaths. However, I did find myself often slowing down as I struggled to traverse the gaps that were more ice than snow.

In the town, it was quiet but not empty. Couples were holding hands, carefully navigating the snow in unison. There were families and others going out to shop and trying not to fall over.

On the journey back home, I immediately noticed puddles of sludge. Snow's fateful day has come. I slowed my pace, savouring the moment. I felt the pinch of sorrow as I pondered if there would ever be snow like this again? It was like a friend you haven't seen in forever and then suddenly parting ways, never knowing when you'll meet again.

I often find myself just trying to make it through the day, often missing the small moments in between. Moments like the snow...so joyful yet devastatingly fleeting, like you can never enjoy it enough. Moments like these remind me that I'm still breathing, I'm still alive. That there's more to life than just getting to the next level. Perhaps a life well lived isn't always about how much you achieve, but the moments, the people you *really* take time to appreciate. Just like the snow, everything is fleeting.

