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Poetry

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In A Field Of Weeds

"Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature, but he is a thinking reed."
—Pascal, *Pensées*

Five degrees. Rough, shifting winds. Sunlight crashing
Almost audibly, sky to snow–pack, snow–pack to sky.
Eyes shrink hard to their smallest stop, but winter drills in.
Brilliant splinters of ice in the air blow up and down.

In a polished field stiff weeds poke through like rusty wire.
Stems and branches, anchored in ice, shake hard with gusts,
Knock stalk on stalk and litter the snow with broken reeds.
Detritus lifts in a whirl of air, then lies back down.

Hollow weeds rattle bone on bone, and the man who listens
Slowly turns to scan the rim of an icy zero. Acres of snow
Reach every way. Sunlight fills the blinding page.
He has come out here to read what it says, and he thinks he knows.

He walks back home and remembers everything;
Everything holds in his icy mirror. When words arrive
He chooses those which fabricate nothing, take nothing away.
I read the words on the snowy page, and they stick like burrs.

They name the lterror and make it flower. We stand together.

-Robert Schultz

Near Dawn

Tugged out of bed by a dream,
he enters the world, confronts
cats stalking the hallway,
aghast at this early walker.
The moon, almost full, glows
on the crust of old snow.

Back in the bedroom, his wife
dreams in a world that is his
to return to. Perhaps.
But for now he's here
by the window, moonlight
glazing the earth.

He is watching five foxes
drift through the yard, gather
for a moment by the pear tree,
sniffing the air, inquisitors
out in the cold. They turn to what
beckons higher up on the ridge.

—Eric Trethewey

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