

## DAKOTA CODA

Snow has fallen,  
and not a tear drawn,  
lakes full of white beards  
and old, whispery wisdoms.

This is what you wanted:  
to be a monk  
in a high tower  
above the snow,

watching the river below  
break ice-banks  
and rob the skies  
of their putrid reign.

But wanting  
is a foolish game:  
a penguin's waddle  
over breaking ice,

a fish leaping  
over endless falls,  
pines bristling  
before they're cut down,

the magician folding,  
revealing the old trick  
behind the card,

a phony finger,  
a play of the eyes,  
a clever indirection.

But the snow is here—  
it has fallen—  
blanketing the fields,

putting a tireless process  
or two to rest.

The monk returns  
to his high tower,  
sips his tea,  
and softens his breath.