



Jean Cleve

### How Snow Necessitates the Poem

Often does it never snow  
on the coast of Oregon  
so when it does oh when it blows  
what changes souls feel going on

from jeanjacketed to overcoat,  
from ha!ha!ha! to undertonal  
murmur.

Brr.

World slurry-wrapped. A blur.

Cars in their garages, damped.  
Folks in their own footprints, rapt.  
Now the flakes fall fast.

Now the flakes fall fat.  
I walk my whitening whereabout,  
must pause, must stop, eyes closed, head back,  
child tongue poked out.

### Approaching the Stop Sign

Approaching the stop-sign shape,  
approaching in color its opposite,  
of a colorlessness, of a blend in sand,  
the crabshell, its perimeter broken  
by gulls who have sucked them clean,

decorates your shorescape.

A storm-torn wing lies beside it.  
Tan. That of a gull adolescent,  
feathers sturdy as if freshly combed  
and coated in brilliantine,

though in sea-colored seaweed entangled  
and, in form, a boomerang.

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Jean Cleve, a much-published poet, lives and writes in Oregon.

Photo from Wonewoc Public Library