

**Northern Light**

The Canada and Snow geese have already flown south.  
It seems they passed overhead long ago.  
It is only November.  
Were there fewer this year?  
That amazing crackle high above, a skein of German tourists  
vocally admiring the view.  
Now it is dark upon waking.  
That steady, continuous drumming of rain on roof.  
The weather vane, violently directional.  
Cloud and rain blowing from the southeast.  
Cloud and snow sleeting from the northwest.  
One storm chasing upon the rage of another.  
An extended family of depressions.  
And this, November.  
We can look for a lifting, for light, by late March.  
Four months of interminable night in the North.

In this insomniac climate it is no surprise to hear the peacocks  
outraged in the tree tops.  
They wake in darkness, crying out in sorrow at the loss  
of their colors, that amazing blue beauty.  
As the willow, rock and white tailed ptarmigans whiten in the snow,  
the cocks fear their plumage has turned to the darkness that surrounds.  
In December, whiteness from the northwest.  
Small balls of snow flying off our skis as we down the slopes.  
Shadows of snow, neither light or dark.  
Substance, not reflection.  
The peacock flashes his tail to no avail.  
The new ground cover refuses to reflect.  
No shadows are cast.  
This sun cannot melt the clouds, cannot clear the trees at mid day.  
As bird and man stand exposed in the field,  
their upright shapes in the whiteness: vertical shadows.  
Hiding in whiteness so intense, it is invisible.  
Like light behind the blackness of a pupil.

*Naomi Rachel*