

MIDNIGHT AT OYSTER POND

The first lasting snow
tracks down the distance
a few miles between kills

Alive with brittle whiskers
numb bumping ahead, paws
black bites of north

The ghost of a chance
prints the air, catches
the tail of its best breath

Here, on the poised edge
where choice is nice as ice
and drenched with potential

Then off and over quicksilver
while fresh washed moonlight
whistles with secrets

His last place so concise
it's lost even by dogs
with noses in the know

Far out by the harbour mouth
the mackerel grin to gill
the foxfoot current gone

—Bill Howell