

Text of Shelley Jackson's "Snow"

(transcribed by Alan Liu, April 10, 2016 – April 12, 2019)

(red words mark beginning of new year of writing)

To approach snow [22 Jan. 2014]
too closely is
to forget what
it is," said
the girl who
cried snowflakes. "Through
a microscope one
discovers that there
are many kinds
of snow: those
made up of
tiny paintings of
shipwrecks in the
style of Bonaventura
Peeters, those made
up of miniature
bowls of wax
fruit, very beautifully
and realistically formed,
except for the
size; those made
up of the
fingernail clippings of
babies; and those
made up of
the trimmed and
tattooed scalps of
shrews used as
money by certain
native peoples of
the southern Urals.
There are snows
Made of clock
faces and circular
slide rules, of
maps to undiscovered

countries, of the
shattered breath clouds
of those who
have cried for
help unheard on
a clear winter
day. Obviously there
is snow made
of the unread letters
of unloved lovers,
and metal discs
with serrated edges,
to mention only
one of the
innumerable members of
the great class
of the snows
of war, for
there is no
end to the
forms of cruelty.
But there are
Innumerable kindly snows
as well, such
as those made
of sleep and
dainty snows made
of miniature ladies
underpants, some with
persimmon-colored ribbons
woven through with
lace, some embroidered
with tiny green
apples. There are
hungry snows made
of ground teeth
and sacrificial snows
made of the
breast feathers of songbirds,
each tipped with
a bead of

frozen blood. There
are red snows
and black snows,
blue and green;
city dwellers warn
of yellow snow,
but few know
of the brilliant
canary snow of
certain glacial valleys
in the Alps.

[25 Jan. 2015]

To pick one's
way across it
is like hiking
on a sun,
and in an
avalanche it sings
like a million
meadowlarks so that
travelers forget to

[27 Jan. 2016]

fear, and stand
transfixed as death
plumes down upon
them. There are
sorry snows that
fall already old,
stained and dirt-
pocked and snows
so young that
they are mistaken
for rain. There
are depraved snows
that make unwelcome
advances and cerebral
snows that, sifting
along surfaces, seek
knowledge of the
countless forms of
the world. There
are snows that,
conceiving a more

perfect snow, never [15 March 2017]
fall; doubtful snows
that, after a
few overtures, withdraw
into themselves to
think; snows that,
addressing us at
a myriad points,

compose from these [6 Jan. 2018]
transactions a comprehensive
whole, a sort
of winternet. Of
the countless species
of indoor snow
I shall mention
only a few.

There are indoor
snows that fall
steadily in dark
corners and fill
the drawers of
seldom-used cabinets. There
are others that
rage in the
light blizzards that
can swallow you
on your way
to the bathroom,
and not release
you until the
long thaw of . . . [6 March 2019]