

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

the nights are long and the days short, so i am pretty much forced into going out and buying a string of tiny white christmas lights to hang around the window and along the wall. every year at this time i do the same thing, and it does a lot to relieve the pressures of the winters here. i know that a single string of lights doesn't sound like much, but it is. i completely depend on them. these lights, they remind me of the festive atmosphere of an ocean liner. that's one of my goals in life: to travel around the world on such a ship. it may be my only goal. i lie in bed listening to the stereo with every light off except these christmas lights strung in mid-november desperation. i know it was early to put

them up, and i know it'll be late when i take them down.

SNOW
POEM

written while it was coming down

THESE COLD MOUNTAINS

walking around in bare feet in an almost-dark kitchen, when suddenly i feel something cold under my left foot, and when i lean over to see what it is i find a dime. and it is cold, this dime, very cold. i put it on the stove. i even consider putting the stove on to warm up the dime. but then decide against it. needless to say i have

no good
reason
to have a
warm dime
in my possession.

no one
ever told me
a warm dime
is worth more.
although maybe
in these
cold mountains
it is.

over the sink
onions hanging
sprouting

LIVING ALONE

there's a tomato sitting on the windowsill. it's been there now for over a week. a monstrous thing it is too. and it certainly is ready to be eaten, but i've just been without the patience necessary to make a salad. maybe i should simply take it and cut it up and eat it by itself say with a pinch of salt. the window that it's in looks out onto the motel grounds at the back of the motel. prominent in view is the huge weeping willow tree. when my father was here last week he sat in the chair by the window and he marveled at the size of the tree. he also noticed the tomato sitting there, and he asked me when i was going to eat it, since in his opinion it was as ripe as could be. the sun is shining on it now. shadows go across it. shadows of the weeping willow. it sits there calmly like the buddha. it looks like it has achieved all a tomato can possibly achieve, ever. but it does have to be eaten soon, yes. it's just that it's the last tomato of the season, the last local garden tomato. after this it's back to the tomatoes at the supermarket, and they are nowhere near the same quality. they haven't achieved true tomatohood. but if i am going to eat it tonight i think i'll have it plain, with some salt. an ambitious salad would only take way from the purity of the act. my god, such consideration. only because i live alone do i have the luxury of this consideration. or