

I GREW UP IN A TOWN SO COLD THAT EVEN THE ICE COULD NOT COMMIT SUICIDE

We would walk home backwards, even in summer,
just to keep up the practice. Our house would be buried
in white, the world cocained, and we'd punch each other
at bus stops for heat. This was in a north so north
that there was more reindeer than rain. I love-hated the attic
of the Arctic, my Saami youth, my lichen life,
the way we were almost extinct, almost invisible
in the aurora borealis perfection, as if the sky was dancing
to Armageddon, the winter lasting forever, the Witch
owning everything. My grandfather was a shaman.
He told me to fear heat. I remember his theater eyes.