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A Crystalline Purgatory

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A Crystalline Purgatory

*Katherine
Gillary*

Steadily, I trudge along the snow-covered sidewalk,
Snaking through campus' labyrinthine trails;
My head down and hood up.

Frost dances lightly on still green leaves;
Pirouetting across amber bundles.
Resilient in their fruitless fight against Winter's chill,
Summer's skeletons clinging, still,
To a birch's outstretched fingertips.

Fleeting glimpses of frozen breath die,
Pluming absently from smokeless lungs.
The hot bodies ghost through trembling lips,
Caressing chapped skin turning blue.
Only memories remain.

Where do they go, when their short lives end?