

*Knute Skimmer*

FROM "THEMATIC VARIATIONS"

3. A Glacial Breath

One night while he lay empty,  
nothing in his face,  
a glacial breath, unmeasured,  
filled the waiting space.

Frost was on the planets  
and underneath his feet.  
No image of the universe  
held one degree of heat.

As superficial lustre  
smeared the earth with gloss,  
tears stuck icy to his eyes  
as he beheld the loss,

and Christ Himself stood freezing  
fast to a freezing cross.

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Morning woke him early  
with showers upon the pane.  
He listened to the spatter  
of warm summer rain.

Sunburst followed cloudburst;  
colour streaked the sky;  
a dozen birds held converse  
in artless melody.

But on the bed he stiffened,  
too fixed to turn or toss.  
Each image of his universe  
was dross, dross, dross,

and Christ Himself hung frozen  
hard on the frozen cross.