

SNOW

When the flying boat
returns to earth at last,
I open my eyes
and gaze out the round window.
What is all the white? I whisper.
Where is all the world?

The helping man greets me
and there are many lines and questions
and pieces of paper.

At last I follow him outside.
We call that snow, he says.
Isn't it beautiful?
Do you like the cold?

I want to say
No, this cold is like claws on my skin!
I look around me.

Dead grass pokes through
the unkind blanket of white.
Everywhere the snow
sparkles with light
hard as high sun.
I close my eyes.
I try out my new English words:
How can you live
in this place called America?
It burns your eyes!

The man gives me a fat shirt
and soft things like hands.
Coat, he says. Gloves.
He smiles. You'll get used to it, Kek.

I am a tall boy,
like all my people.
My arms stick out of the coat
like lonely trees.
My fingers cannot make
the gloves work.

I shake my head.

I say, This America is hard work.

His laughter makes little clouds.