

**Ancestors**

The darkness is an old friend,  
is it not? It listens for us,  
heals our step.  
The cedars glitter with their own stars  
by the house  
but where the wall has fallen through  
the air is still  
as thick and warm as fur.

A silver meadow blossoms  
in its own light.  
From the gate the village  
glows as always, singular,  
a bed of coals far below.

As we walk, the road  
grows crystalline and reassuring  
to our feet. Frost settles,  
delicate as fine ash,  
and we meet our children  
as we go.

—*Kim Maltman*