

# Snow

## The Staves

White are the far-off plains, and white  
The fading forests grow;  
The wind dies out along the height  
And denser still the snow,  
A gathering weight on roof and tree  
Falls down scarce audibly.

The road before me smooths and fills  
Apace, and all about  
The fences dwindle, and the hills  
Are blotted slowly out;  
The naked trees loom spectrally  
Into the dim white sky.

The meadows and far-sheeted streams  
Lie still without a sound;  
Like some soft minister of dreams  
The snow-fall hoods me round;  
In wood and water, earth and air,  
A silence everywhere.

Save when at lonely intervals  
Some farmer's sleigh, urged on,  
With rustling runner and sharp bells,  
Swings by me and is gone;  
Or from the empty waste I hear  
A sound remote and clear;  
The barking of a dog, or call  
To cattle, sharply pealed,  
Borne, echoing from some wayside stall  
Or barnyard far afield;  
Then all is silent and the snow falls  
Settling soft and slow  
The evening deepens and the grey  
Folds closer earth and sky  
The world seems shrouded, far away.  
Its noises sleep, and I as secret as  
Yon buried stream plod dumbly on and dream

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