Cold.
Burns my nose,
my cheeks,
my fingers,
frosts my breath,
and stings my eyes.

I. Lights shining
on a winter night
stare through the
icy blackness,
and people stare
at them
in turn
with blurred and
watering gazes
quietly thinking,
wondering,
asking themselves
questions
forced upon them
by the lights.

II. In winter
I walk
with my hands
in my pockets
and my elbows
hugging against my ribs.
The crisp air
bites against
my nostrils,
and I remember
times lost
in warmer arms.

III. I see faces,
cold faces,
pass by me
quickly
without ever
glancing up,
wearling cold smiles,
blank expressions,
and always vacant eyes,
their features
burnt upon
their faces
with some
grim and horrid
iron—
scars set there
forever.

IV. Nothing is honest
any more,
not even
childhood.
Christmas is gone,
prostituted,
clothed in tinsel,
great and ostentatious,
led around
the nation
on a leash
and stored away
after a long
and thorough
milking.
Children too,
are shackled
and led quickly to the marketplace, that it is wrong for men to cry?

VI. Sometimes it seems as if there is just winter for us all. We walk with hands in pockets while the cold burns our noses and stings our hearts until they are numb, and we stare back at lights while dreaming of some favorite warmth and maybe ask ourselves if any of it matters any more.

Cold, comes, and stays, and I must go dive into it and beat it for a time, knowing that whenever I want I can draw away, cast off the cold and pull myself still closer to the warm.