

Winter Cross-Country

You bought a new bike...
I remember your first one--- it was green
and I was jealous of the sissy bar,
you said you could do wheelies
for five blocks, but I never believed it.
This one could get you to work in Milford.
You didn't mind the ride, I'm sure you enjoyed
the sun going; coming back would have been
darkness, crickets, the sound of the tires on the
gravel scattered on the shoulder...
it was summer, but a coldness came up from behind
and lifted you toward Heaven to lay you down
in a silence as full and as dangerous as winter
drifting thick across highway 6.

During track, we would run our cross-countries even
through the drifts. I would have given up except for fear
of admitting defeat to you.
You showed me how to wrap my towel
around my neck before putting on the
sweats..., "keeps the cold out"
You were better built for endurance, light, wiry, I don't
think I told you I envied that.
But I waved to you through the ambulance door
when the pole I was vaulting with threw me
down to the concrete... you were scared... I was so
proud.

I didn't see you through the ambulance door
this time, but you wouldn't have seen me anyway. I wasn't
even scared when you died...
I was counting on your endurance until it was too late.