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Starting From Zero

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STARTING FROM ZERO

When the snow stopped
we stood together looking out the window.
Blind by then and eager
to raise my temperature, I
grabbed you, saying, "This is not
a test," but you were happy
to be pale and cold,
did not appreciate my fingers
touring your face. "Like love
in tennis," you said, "we lose."

It was hell. Snowbound
and bound now to tell the truth,
we went to bed. "I hate you,"
I said, "and I hate the snow
and the dark and high places,
all of which you are."
"I hate you," you said. "I hate
the bitter taste. I don't care
if you're good for me: I hate you."

We heard the ice crack on the roof.
We still had food, candles,
the foundations of life.
And I had you starting
from zero and you had me. Instinctively
we huddled in bed like bears.
"Peace," you said to me.
"Luck," I whispered. "You'll never
shovel your way out."