

What the Cold Wants

Total mind control, obviously,
though it might start with a simple ceviche,
ample off-street parking,
and a mostly believable alibi.
Generally speaking, what the cold wants
is ridiculous. The problem with the cold
is that it comes from more of it.
It's divisible only by one and itself.
The cold is not invited
to many weddings.
Among the cold's lifetime
achievements: every touch
of a stethoscope, zero for sixteen
from the floor, Shackleton's last note.
According to experts, the average
temperature of the entire universe
is negative 454.76 degrees.
Room temperature is a miracle.
More than anything else,
that's what the cold wants you to believe,
that it's perfectly normal,
that it should be allowed to feel
right at home as it seeps beneath the doors
in search of a meal whose first
course is your bare toes.
Like a hungry predator,
the cold saves the warm, wet heart for last.
The cold is a form of surveillance.
It's mostly just time.
Safe at headquarters, the scientist
listens to the batteries in the radio collar
slowly die, but she knows
the wolf is out there still.
From you, the cold wants nothing.
Only in.



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