Snow Day

BY [BILLY COLLINS](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/billy-collins)

Today we woke up to a revolution of snow,

its white flag waving over everything,

the landscape vanished,

not a single mouse to punctuate the blankness,

and beyond these windows

the government buildings smothered,

schools and libraries buried, the post office lost

under the noiseless drift,

the paths of trains softly blocked,

the world fallen under this falling.

In a while, I will put on some boots

and step out like someone walking in water,

and the dog will porpoise through the drifts,

and I will shake a laden branch

sending a cold shower down on us both.

But for now I am a willing prisoner in this house,

a sympathizer with the anarchic cause of snow.

I will make a pot of tea

and listen to the plastic radio on the counter,

as glad as anyone to hear the news

that the Kiddie Corner School is closed,

the Ding-Dong School, closed.

the All Aboard Children’s School, closed,

the Hi-Ho Nursery School, closed,

along with—some will be delighted to hear—

the Toadstool School, the Little School,

Little Sparrows Nursery School,

Little Stars Pre-School, Peas-and-Carrots Day School

the Tom Thumb Child Center, all closed,

and—clap your hands—the Peanuts Play School.

So this is where the children hide all day,

These are the nests where they letter and draw,

where they put on their bright miniature jackets,

all darting and climbing and sliding,

all but the few girls whispering by the fence.

And now I am listening hard

in the grandiose silence of the snow,

trying to hear what those three girls are plotting,

what riot is afoot,

which small queen is about to be brought down.

My Parents Kept Me

BY [Stephen](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/billy-collins) Spender

My parents kept me from children who were rough

and who threw words like stones and who wore torn clothes.

Their thighs showed through rags. They ran in the street

and climbed clifs and stripped by the country streams.

I feared more than tigers their muscles like iron

and their jerking hands and their knees tight on my arms.

I feared the salt coarse pointing of those boys

who copied my lisp behind me on the road.

They were lithe (quick), they sprang out behind hedges

like dogs to bark at our world. They threw mud

and I looked another way, pretending to smile,

I longed to forgive them, yet they never smiled.