

WINTER WALKING

Upwind:

Frozen wisps whisk over corrugated fields
Nor'wester funnels tundra chill faceward
crunch, snap, crackle of footsteps on the trail
Arctic razors slash the cheek, belly burns as down falls
numbness tears at exposed earlobe, sunglasses mist
as warm exhale escapes the scarf, crystals glisten on the moustache.

Downwind:

Tiny diamonds strobe over eggwhite snow
river hummocked, still, no lakeward current visible
turn into woods, sheltered, no shrill gusts, only trees
gently moaning, swaying overhead, deer pass here,
a distant caw, faint honking way upstream
renewed exposure awaits at forest's edge.

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