

Weather report

by [Robert Siegel](#) in the [January 11, 2005](#) issue

The snow in North Dakota asks a question
with no question mark, no capital letter,
to indicate where it begins and ends
or what lies in the middle, for that matter.
The question is white and drifts above the cab
of the snowplow while in its orange light
people lean into the wind along the curb,
digging out cars that vanish in the night.

At home their dogs are silent, hearing no sound.
The cattle huddle and freeze, and buffalo
crossing the buried fence, free now to roam,
stand silver and stiff as nickels in the dawn—
eyes frozen wide and blank as if they tried
to comprehend the question while they died.