

I am from Kashmir, it was very very edifying for me to see the mountains with snow today, because I am from the Himalayas. As a matter a fact when I came to the United States first I was at Port Authority, New York, and there was a guy from Boston there, and we got on the bus to go to Penn State, it was about 2 in the morning. And he said “oh you know in a few hours you’ll see the mountains” and after a few hours I said to him “well when are the mountains coming?” and he said “we are in them” and I said “you know I come from the Himalayas, these we don’t call mountains”. It is sort of gratifying to be in Utah and seeing mountains.

“Snowmen”

My ancestor, a man  
of Himalayan snow,  
came to Kashmir from Samarkand,  
carrying a bag  
of whale bones:  
heirlooms from sea funerals.  
His skeleton  
carved from glaciers, his breath  
arctic,  
he froze women in his embrace.  
His wife thawed into stony water,  
her old age a clear  
evaporation.

This heirloom,  
his skeleton under my skin, passed  
from son to grandson,  
generations of snowmen on my back.  
They tap every year on my window,  
their voices hushed to ice.

No, they won’t let me out of winter,  
and I’ve promised myself,  
even if I’m the last snowman,  
that I’ll ride into spring  
on their melting shoulders.