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Best for Last

Reeve Spencer Kelley

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REEVE SPENCER KELLEY

BEST FOR LAST

Fragrant was the cigar he smoked
That night, clouds of it killing,
With kind spice, the onion,
Soap, and cabbage of us;

My father, rolling it in the unsteady
Of his gentle fingers, opening
Its drafts and draws, watching
The twist and drift of smoke:
Ghost of an affluent uncle come back
To wish him peace and perfume.

So, blowing an occasional mist
At each of us, in his corner,
He filled and emptied the slow cave
Of his mouth and made an hour
Disappear in ash and wonder.

It was better than television.
It was more serious than life.
It was the last cigar he smoked
Before he went to the hospital.

MORGAN GIBSON

THROUGH APRIL

Through April and into May
children ran out of the woods
with handfuls of dirty snow
and laughing they ran away.

Something I wanted to say
lingered still like snow
dirty and deep in the woods
till it melted all away.