

# *Listening to Christmas*

Have you ever heard snow?  
Not the howling wind of a blizzard,  
not the crackling of snow underfoot,  
but the actual falling of snow?

We heard it one night in Wisconsin  
quite unexpectedly  
while walking up a hill  
toward our cabin in the woods,  
a soft whisper between footsteps.  
We stopped, switched off our flashlights,  
and just listened.  
All around us in the darkness  
we heard the gentle fall  
of snow on snow.  
No wind, no sound  
but the snow.

Have you ever heard Christmas?  
Not the traffic noises in the city,  
not the bells and hymns and carols,  
beautiful as they are,  
not even the laughter of your children  
as they open their presents—  
but Christmas itself?

Have you been by yourself  
and just sat and listened  
to the silence within,  
patiently, without letting the mind  
race to the next Christmas chore?

Perhaps if you have,  
you felt the pulse of all humanity  
beating in your own heart.

Perhaps you noticed  
an outflowing of love  
for all your brothers and sisters  
on the earth,  
a soft sense of Oneness  
with all that lives.

In the silence of a snowy night,  
listen intently, holding your breath,  
and you may hear snow on snow.

Serene, alone,  
undisturbed by thought,  
listen to the silence in your heart,  
and you may hear Christmas.



*Alan Harris*