

*THAT AUGUST, it snowed neither in Berlin nor in Guernica nor in Warsaw nor in Rotterdam nor in Caen nor in Coventry.*

*Actually, that's a lie. It snowed in Berlin.*

*There was an industrial accident. An explosion at a factory in the Siemensstadt area of the city, followed by a ferocious fire. A plume rose and was carried towards the stadium at the Reichssportfeld.*

*It snowed briefly on spectators watching the athletics there. Smuts of soot, like tiny feathers, black cygnet or dark eiderdown. As they fell they rocked gently. The effect was soothing. Eerie but soothing.*

*There was a susurrus of murmuring in the crowd. Then pockets of laughter.*

*Then the wind changed and the moment passed.*

*Someone made a winning attempt in the long jump final.*

*In Guernica and Caen and Warsaw and Coventry and Rotterdam, it didn't snow until later.*

*But in some of those cases not all that much later.*