

PRESERVING GRACE

POETRY

Chandlee Bryan

As friends in warmer climes complain of pollen,
the cruelest month runs hot and cold

sleet sun rain, snow *wind*
Into the not Just- spring, **we sink,** ankle-deep in muck
conditions ever-shifting

 Semi-frozen, *slush* **hard-pack**
 striking back against our shovel
What remains of *Grace Eventually*, our beloved, stands upright.

 The cat is in the bag,
wedged between green beans, chicken cutlets, fudgsicles,
 underneath the basement freezer lid *she waits*
outside hark! Green beneath the brown leaves of fall
 a flash of purple blossoms,

Iris, could you, would you, bring the spring?
As snow plow bills pile up, we take solace in the promise
 of tundra to return to dirt
 of shovel to break space

Oh winter, damn you— leave at once!
 Rush forth my spring
 Come in, make room
 a resting place for *Grace*

As friends in warmer climes complain of heat,
our ground will break way for greater peace among mice
and freezer space
Grace eventually, realized.