

MOUNTAIN LIGHT

By Richard Schalhamer

crawling slowly from a down filled cocoon
breath is fogged by the crisp mountain air
arms stretched to their limits towards the heavens
yawns and crackling ease the stiffness

silhouetted under a black cape of darkness
the 29 peaks enclosing Zermatt still sleep
civilization is only represented by a hillside chalet
shadowing itself into the sunless slopes

the Matter Vispa is making the only sound
as it briskly flows through the sleeping valley
a pale gray sky is the only light
lit by a distant sun floating over Austria

like a grandmother's shawl
the bag is wrapped around my shoulders
a remnant of French bread is my breakfast
softened by a sip of ice chunked Lowenbrau.

a dimmer switch slowly turns up the flannelled sky
daytime blue starts replacing the dull morning gray
all else is still only a dark silhouette
weaving itself amongst the azure

like the pull of the chain on a fine table lamp
the morning sun instantly lights up the Matterhorn
illuminating only itself
amplifying the countryside's ebony veil.

the Matterhorn's light glows brighter
glacial valleys appeared deeper
detailed peaks become clearer
its horn-shape adjusts into a sharp focus.

a fiery torch slowly lighting up its kingdom
announcing that all should wake from the darkness.
gaze upon the master of the valley
behold the Eiffel Tower of Zermatt

first light glows over Hinterdorf Cemetery
souls of climbers who did not survive the Matterhorn's cliffs.
the second light illuminates my hillside perch
signaling me that its peak is waiting