

## *Long Jump*

*“Long jumpers often use a technique for that starts from the pit and steps backwards to determine a starting position. They stride the first few steps to get create a pace, and then sprint the remaining distance to build enough momentum for the jump. About a foot from the pit is a chalk line, touch the chalk and you’re disqualified. Fall backwards and you lose crucial inches. Often, we win by the tiniest margin.”*

Before her lies nothing, the track is clean  
The chalk is fresh, her thoughts, serene  
Voices bubble, a cheer resounds  
Her toe digs deeper into the ground

Twelve steps. Counted. Twice and one  
Four steps to pace, eight just to run  
The pit is daunting, smoothed and untouched  
A whistle blows, the crowd is hushed

Stride, stride, stride, she switches to sprint  
Gone are the people, replaced by wind  
Counting backwards, step by step  
She feels the tension lift her legs

Right foot to kick off, both feet to land  
She heaves herself forward into the sand  
It depresses and alters, shifts as she falls  
Behind her “No foul!” is immediately called

A tape, the measure, an inch for the gold  
Numbers are called- she’s suddenly cold  
A minute, two minutes, a tally of scores  
The final announced, inside her heart slows

Three steps to clamber, the numbers in bold  
A ribbon, a medal, certificate to hold  
3, 2, 1 “Cheese!” a flash, a smile  
Number **one** marks the step that I climbed

*First Snow*

They fell at night

I awoke to speckles  
and spots  
Like cotton  
that stained  
the ground

it touched

The white was slight  
and light  
The flakes kissed  
the ground

they touched

*A call to home  
delight! dismay*

*7480 miles away*

*Mom wished she could  
said she would  
visit and see the snow one day*

A sight, a sight  
a thousand lights  
shared with mom  
this winter day