



Dorothy Wordsworth's Christmas Birthday

Carol Ann Duffy

Illustrated by Tom Duxbury

PICADOR

First, frost at midnight –
Moon, Venus and Jupiter
named in their places.

Ice, like a cold key,
turning its lock on the lake;
nervous stars trapped there.



Darkness, a hand poised
over the chord of the hills;
the strange word *moveless*.

The landscape muted;
soft apprehension of snow,
a holding of breath.



Up, rapt at her gate,
Dorothy Wordsworth ages
one year in an hour;

her Christmas birthday
inventoried by an owl,
clock-eyed, time-keeper.



