

Claude Monet's *Snow Scene at Argenteuil*

## Looking into Winter's Eyes

**TULIP CHOWDHURY**

It is a gloomy, winter day in Amherst, Massachusetts. Layers of snow cover trees and ground. The snow is like white caps of different shapes and sizes. The hushed silence of deep winter hangs heavy in the air. But stillness rings the memory chords of warmer days past. And thoughts move forward to the coming seasons.

Beneath the snow I could see winter hugging the previous spring. When I step on the soft snow, the leg digs deep until the snow is laired on the brown grass. And you remember that the brown grass was green only some days ago. The daffodils, crocus, tulips and other perennials are in their seasonal sleep. Leaves

and flowers that adorned the trees through summer days have withered and are decaying on the earth. Most of the birds that sang through the warm days have migrated. Few birds that stayed back to brave the snow and cold send occasional tweets to each other. People prefer to stay inside and rest by the fireside. The dark, winter day is like a suppressed light, like a breath withheld that makes one wonder when the sun will be out again. Winter, coming in the end of the year, beneath its grayness holds spring, summer and fall in its bosom. Like a keeper of secrets, it harbours traces of the days gone and bubbles with aspirations for the New Year.

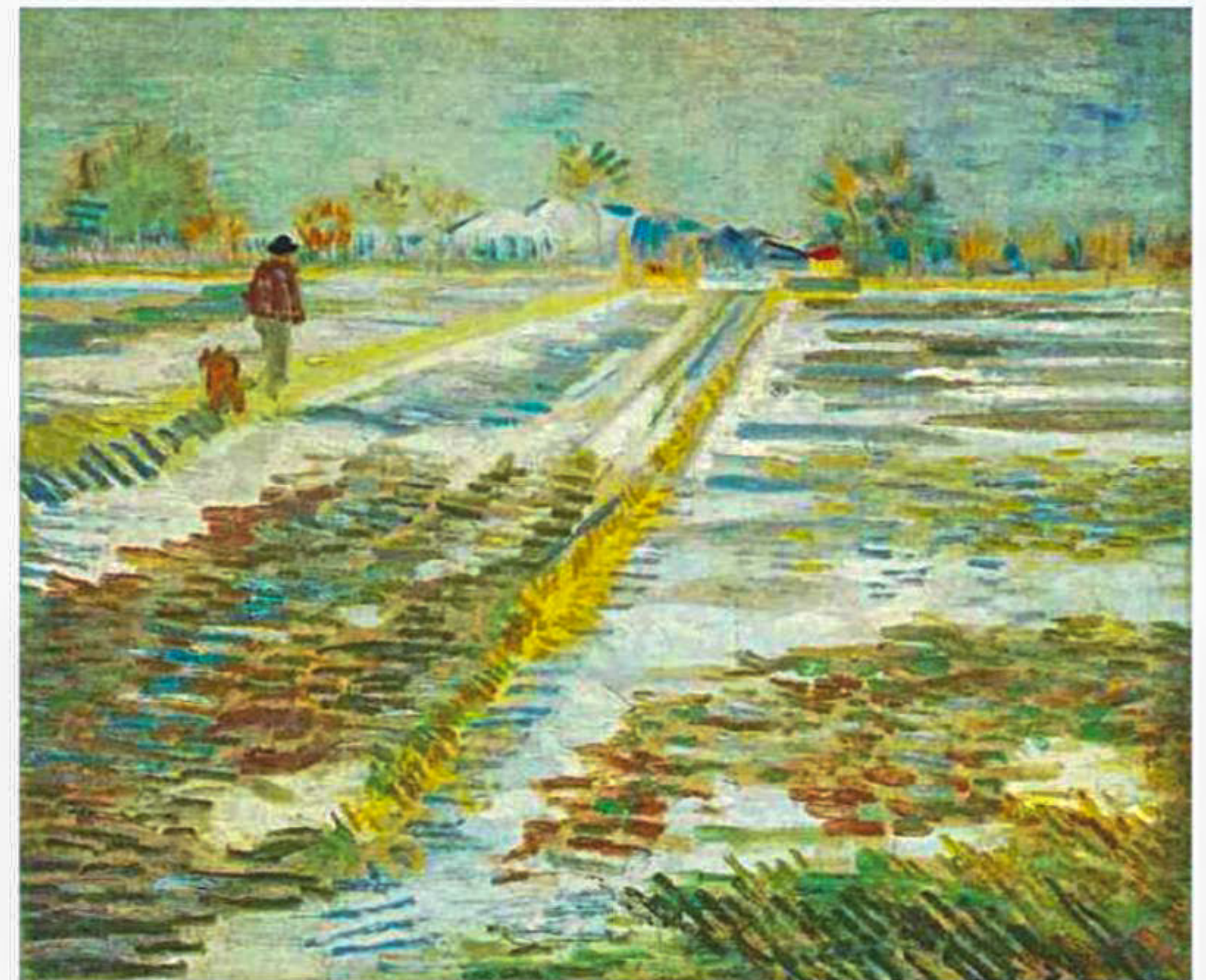
Winter comes to place a period after the twelve months for 2014. But the ending is pregnant with tales of the past, and whispers of possibilities for the future. Images of the marked months on the calendar flit on the mind. Voices echo and memories play games in light and shadow. Emotions take rides with joy and sorrow. While some memories strike happy and sad tunes, the poignant ones hold us in awe. In the same package are thoughts that accept life challenges and then move on with patience and hope.

This winter with its chilly wind and snow is also a winter that waits to herald in the next spring. While animals hibernate, leaves and flowers take a break in their displays, our wardrobes and lifestyles take seasonal changes. These are days when a dashing

sky of our memories, they touch us as we fly on the wings of time.

Standing on the threshold of a new year, life is reflected on a two-way mirror. Life and death, sunrise and sunset, joy and sorrow and so many other paradoxes of life highlight the bleak winter day. Within it all our hopes and dreams weave tales. The past months have enriched our wisdom with experiences and yet the future looms with apprehensions. Will the coming spring be beautiful like the one gone? As the winter gives stark reminders of decay and death, thoughts of inevitable death comes.

Stepping out of the house, I step on the white snow. As the feet dig into the soft mounds, I vision the sleeping grasses beneath. To me, the snow is not white at all, it reflects all the colours of spring,

Vincent van Gogh's *Landscape in the Snow*

beauty walks by with her boots clicking away on the pavements and makes you stare at her face. Times when your heart cries for the less fortunate when a man in scanty winter clothes waits shivering at the bus stop. Winters in December, with snow or without, mark the end of the year. Somewhere in an invisible lair of sudden pause, winter rests with promises of warm days. There are rainbows on the

summer and fall. I imagine the vibrant colours on the endless white land. I wonder how green the grass will be in the coming spring. And with a quivering heart I wonder if I will be there to witness the appearance of yet another spring. The lust for life makes me open my heart to 2015 while I hum Tagore's song,

*edin aaji kon ghore go khule dilo daar*