

A Warming Activity

After huffing and puffing a while
on Friday the oil burner dies.
The house is quickly frozen,
we huddle round a fan-heater.
I look for the fault and frown.
The wife is ringing for an engineer.

Searching for distraction
I start playing in the compost.
Heap one is a tangle, of
beanstalks, rotting fruit and veg,
egg shells, sprout stems, mouldy cheese,
out of date custard and puds.

Heap two is now mature.
Sweet smelling humus, worms.
I shovel into barrows, tip it
on the cleared plot and spread.
Rest a while, take off my jacket.

But Ah! Heap three is my delight.
A mix of horse dung and chicken shit,
ideal compost accelerators.
I rebuild heap two with layers of this,
and straggly chunks of heap one.
After an hour I cover with tarpaulin.

I'm sweating, happy, fragrant.
My wife is wearing coat and gloves,
she sniffs 'you need a bath.'
The water is stone cold, of course.