

“INASMUCH....”

by
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Wild tempest swirled on Moscow's castled height;
Wild sleet shot slanting down the wind of night;
Quick snarling mouths from out the darkness sprang
To strike you in the face with tooth and fang.
Javelins of ice hung on the roofs of all;

The very stones were aching in the wall,
Where Ivan stood a watchman on his hour,
Guarding the Kremlin by the northern tower,
When, lo! a half-bare beggar tottered past,
Shrunk up and stiffened in the bitter blast.
A heap of misery he drifted by,
And from the heap came out a broken cry.

At this the watchman straightened with a start;
A tender grief was tugging at his heart,
The thought of his dead father, bent and old
And lying lonesome in the ground so cold.
Then cried the watchman starting from his post:
“Little father, this is yours; you need it most!”
And tearing off his hairy coat, he ran
And wrapt it warm around the beggar man.

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