

The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps  
sent a reconnaissance unit out onto the icy wasteland.

It began to snow  
immediately,  
snowed for two days and the unit  
did not return.

The lieutenant suffered:  
he had dispatched  
his own people to death.

But the third day the unit came back.  
Where had they been? How had they made their way?  
Yes, they said, we considered ourselves  
lost and waited for the end. And then one of us  
found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down.  
We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm and then with the map  
we discovered our bearings.  
And here we are.

The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map  
and had a good look at it. It was not a map of the Alps  
but of the Pyrenees.

**Miroslav Holub, *Brief Thoughts on Maps*. TLS, Feb 4, '77**

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