



Watching the big snowflakes drift lazily past my window, I was reminded of a conversation I'd had several years ago with a friend who had lived her whole life in southern California. We were at a meeting in the mountains of North Carolina, and it snowed while we were there. One morning at breakfast she told those of us around the table that she'd had the weirdest sensation the night before, standing at her hotel window watching it snow. At first she couldn't put her finger on what she was experiencing but then it hit her: She'd never actually seen snow falling before. Yes, she'd seen pictures or movies/TV shows with active showing scenes, and she'd been amidst snow during a few ski trips, but the snow had always already been on the ground. This was the first time she'd gotten to see the snowfall process in real time, in person.

I was a little stunned. I couldn't imagine being deprived of that experience for six decades! One of my favorite things about winter is watching the snowflakes fall, especially at night when the streetlamps set them aglow in their triangles of light. It's mesmerizing, and usually emphasizes the coziness of the warm room I'm in (magnified, of course, if I also happen to be sitting in front of a fire and sipping hot chocolate!).

I thought of this today and gave thanks that I live in a region of the world with four distinct seasons, one of which provides opportunities to watch snowflakes drift lazily past my window.