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Bale

The Grove 14 (2007)

What the bales govern
concentrated, still,
each to itself but gathered
isn't obvious.

They're just leavings
a brisk machine
compacts to look
roundly natural.

I'm all for curves,
the inward
solace they give;
their long September shadows.

I'm chastened
by the distance and the space
around their group.
But how?

Picked on the stubble flats,
they counter
mind to grant
a formal education.

One is alone.
Others cohere.
All are round.
None rolls.

Empty of evil, they save.
Why would I jump
their free constraint
for more than this?

The curves are silvered,
the flats in shade.
They trail that token darkness
like a cloak.

More olderly than trees,
they hide in the dark,
moons to which
I respond.

The bales that govern
distil this concentrate,
amassed, alone, their subject
neither here nor there.

Buzzard

A hazard for any rat
caught in the open

is being noted
by eyes cold and close

on their vizard of horn,
gripped, and mashed

to mince in that gizzard,
A moment too late

and over the motorway
is the languid lift-off

with deliberate downstrokes,
the tenderly taloned

twitching corpse
a scissored thread.

Hawk Kill

Among the confetti of petals
for a wedding of wind and cherry,
unstirring breast down, plucked
and separated.

Breeze twirls the cherry fall
over the grass; and it's hard to tell
the petals you see
from that pale snow.

The pigeon under the trees
is wrecked and its heart
picked out of many and eaten.
Its loss apart,

There's no more to it than this.
Down stirs and will drift
among the petals,
the wind's gift.

