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## Why Dogs Stopped Flying: Poems

Kenneth W. Brewer

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WHY DOGS  
STOPPED  
FLYING



P · O · E · M · S

KENNETH W.  
BREWER

WHY DOGS STOPPED FLYING



WHY DOGS  
STOPPED FLYING

*Poems*  
*by*

Kenneth W. Brewer

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*This book is dedicated to my loving wife,  
our extended family, and our many  
friends. I love you all.*

*The book is also dedicated to a more  
responsible attitude toward the planet  
we live on and all the other beings  
who live here with us.*



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WHY DOGS STOPPED FLYING



“They chatter when they should be dumb,  
And when they *ought* to speak are mum.”

Marie de France, “The Cock and the Fox”  
(trans. By W. W. Skeat)



## WHY DOGS STOPPED FLYING

Before humans, dogs flew everywhere.  
Their wings of silky fur wrapped hollow bones.  
Their tails wagged like rudders through wind,  
their stomachs bare to the sullen earth.

Out of sorrow for the first humans—  
stumbling, crawling, helpless and cold—  
dogs folded their great wings into paws  
soft enough to walk beside us forever.

They still weep for us, pity our small noses,  
our unfortunate eyes, our dull teeth.  
They lick our faces clean,  
keep us warm at night.  
Sometimes they remember flying  
and bite our ugly hands.

## BELTED GALLOWAYS

Imagine a black cow  
with the middle third  
a belt of white carpet.

Or imagine an Oreo  
with four legs, a tail,  
and a slobbering head.

There, you have it.  
The Belted Galloway.  
Like a jack-a-lope postcard.

I've seen them, though,  
a small herd  
in Pine Valley, Utah.

Gentle, munching creatures,  
they looked at me  
through the rail fence,

at my white beard  
streaked with black.

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRDS

*For David Lee*

All afternoon,  
“little warriors”  
guard the feeder  
from each other.

Fierce wings  
beat the air  
like Milton’s angels  
in heavenly war.

They fight  
for sweet water  
hanging  
from a roof.

All around me,  
loud as any firmament  
I shall ever hear,  
*tiny wings whir.*

## BROTHER SLUG

Uncircumcised, I turned  
to face the wall in after-practice showers.  
The other boys dangled snakes  
compared to my slug.

But I kept shy in most ways,  
pulling the skin over my head,  
hiding poverty in its tattered bag,  
committing myself to blindness.

Then a woman's hand coaxed me out  
in the back seat of a '57 Chevy,  
the convertible top popped  
like a bottle of Bud.

In my mind, a banana slug  
the size of Portland  
glistened and slimed its slow way  
toward Salt Lake City.

So I thank her now for teaching me  
how small things can grow  
nurtured to attention  
in the otherwise dark.

## CAT

I trapped  
the tri-colored cat  
in the hallway

so she rolled  
on her back,  
dug claws in the rug,

smiled, then  
sprang  
through my legs

into the kitchen,  
under the table,  
laughter

rippling her body  
to the twitch  
of her tail.

## CHICKADEE DRIVE-IN

To watch them eat sunflower seeds  
at the crab apple tree feeder,  
I would guess they invented  
the fast-food restaurant.

Each chickadee darts in,  
grabs a seed in its beak,  
flies to a distant branch  
to park and eat,  
never doffs its black cap,  
no tips, no chit-chat,  
just a quick meal on the fly.

But if the cook's remiss  
and forgets to fill the feeder,  
then the chattering begins.  
I think of old people  
used to certain ways, rhythms,  
expectations of time and place.

I see their arms flutter  
in their black sleeves,  
their beaks shrill with upset,  
their eyes large, intent,  
focused on some distant branch  
they expect to clutch.

They never flock.  
They eat alone.  
Fast food or nothing.  
Then one day,  
beneath their folded wings,  
the branch breaks.

## COYOTE ON A CLOUD OF NITROGEN

Like Lucy in the Sky,  
Coyote floats, her ragged fur  
fluffed out to wing span.

Below, in a brown haze,  
cars, trucks, airplanes full of people  
who have left their spirits at the curb,

zigzag the planet as if perpetual motion  
were the only law of Nature, and time  
a commodity to be spent or banked.

“Why am I laughing?” asks the Angel Coyote.  
“I should weep for these humans.”  
But her tears, falling, turn to mud.

## CURL

*For Kathryn and Manon*

1.

The human ear curls, coils, turns  
into and around like seashell,  
trilobite, riding the body, turtle shell  
latched to bone, building  
in which we live, our second skin,  
our shelter, our hook, herald, hospice.

The human ear bends sound  
through outer hairs and canals.  
Drummed into the middle hall,  
sound vibrates into circles through  
hammer, anvil, stirrup, cochlear  
promontory, and the round window.

The inner great hall of cochlea,  
snail-shaped bone, and labyrinth,  
moves sound across hair cells  
atop the organ of Corti, changing  
acoustic to electric and I hear  
rain click on the bay window,  
the Schnauzer snore on the couch,  
tires sizzle on wet pavement,  
the Nutcracker Suite on the radio  
down the hallway in another room,  
my slow breaths exhaling and inhaling  
a circular rhythm, all of this  
funneled into my folded brain  
to keep this moment clear till sound,  
like a tremolo of the heart's desire, stops.

2.

Falling from mountain springs  
into the slower, winding traces  
of the valley, the river's winter  
colors deepen, the snowy banks  
dotted with tufts of green and brown,  
ice-trimmed currents clear

to the muddy bottom like flowing  
granite walls constantly shifting.

Younger, I walked the river's edges  
to see and listen. Canada geese and  
mallards would startle me with  
wing-beat rattle from wind-sheltered  
bends behind high banks. They roiled  
calm water into shattered glass. Some  
mornings I would sit, study  
mouse and fox tracks, imagine  
the dramas of frozen nights,  
animal eyes ablaze like the moon.

Older now, I dream my ice-caked  
beard dripping from steamy  
coffee, the sun rising above  
the Wasatch range and spreading  
light across the valley, trout  
holding deep in the river, their  
dull backs moving easily, ducks  
drifting with bills curled  
under their wings, all of us alive  
and waiting for the warmth  
that always arrives, that  
changes the river, inside or out.

3.

What about love, the great  
shape-shifter? Love curls  
around us like a cat draped  
over our shoulders, purring,  
licking a paw, when suddenly  
claws sink into our skin, out again.  
Hope, joy, sorrow, even the  
words roll from our tongue,  
unfurl from inside-out searching  
for an outside-in, an opening

thin or thick like lips upon reed,  
fingers upon string, flesh upon bone,  
river upon rock, snow that trickles  
down glass wrinkling the world,  
till what we think we know shifts  
and all we have left is one note.  
The sound of love.

## DERMATOPHAGOIDES

In extreme density perhaps 3,500 mites  
live in a gram of dust, like angels.  
They feed on flakes of skin, hair,  
all the detritus we shake away.

Not even the air around us is empty.  
Dust mites have their own detritus.  
Invisible pellets of mite feces float  
like balloons on the slightest whisper.

## FIELD GUIDE

A robin will pose in a child's aim  
and surrender its feathered body,  
claws, tail, black and white throat.

Some children learn quickly  
the living robin hops, cocks its head,  
tugs night crawlers and sings.

Other children hold death in their hands,  
eager to poke the vacant eyes, hang  
the stiffening body on their mind's wall.

## FISHING BEFORE THE FROST

*For Leslie Norris*

In these mountain Valleys,  
frost eats more tomatoes  
fresh from the fence row  
than I ever do.

My wife's labor's lost  
sometimes in late August  
when I turn to fishing  
for lunk-bellied browns.

In the chill early evening,  
trout rise to hatches  
and the bats and I do well  
in our separate catches,

bats with their mitt-like wings  
full of the invisible things  
of the darkening air, and me  
with my grass-lined creel.

Most autumns here  
when tomatoes turn almost pink,  
I have learned to expect  
the worst of weather's flukes.

Each morning I check the fence  
for vines blackened by surprise,  
tomatoes turned to lumps of coal  
beneath the silver, lacy frost.

Some years the changes  
come far too early  
and bring my wife to tears  
and me to poetry.

Yet, come evening, I disappear  
to the dark river where trout rise  
wordless as winter dreams  
cold in these aging hands.

## FOX AT PLAY

I watched a red fox  
in the wheat field  
between the blue house  
and the Bear River.

She stood, ears pricked,  
head tilted to one side,  
then suddenly leaped  
all four legs

straight in the air  
and down pounced  
on a mound of snow,  
a meadow vole.

Her reddish flanks froze.  
Her forepaws stretched,  
clawed the snow.  
She tilted her head.

Again she leaped,  
four pogo sticks  
with a red back  
and a pointed snout,

a dozen times,  
while I laughed  
behind my picture window,  
slapped my legs

as if a circus  
had come to the farm,  
till she caught one,  
tossed it high like a furry ball.

Then only snow remained.

## GOAT'S MILK

In the cool Pine Valley mountains  
above an August desert heat,  
every goat gave three quarts a day  
of smooth and creamy milk.  
Herders kept one-third, sold the rest.  
Then one sunrise the southern sky  
burst into light like a match  
and slowly darkened to a pink haze.

Eleven million curies of iodine-131  
caught the winds at detonation  
then sprinkled back to earth  
like salt over the horizon's shoulder,  
like small angels of death  
the color of goat's milk.

## GOLDENROD SPIDER

She nestles inside a yellow daylily  
halfway down its long tube, behind the anthers.

*Hyperiod hemerocallis* open their mouths  
to the sun like sirens to large bee flies.

When the bee fly comes for nectar,  
the goldenrod kills it, holds the body half a day.

She eats what she wants, lets the shell fall,  
then crablike crawls into yellow and waits.

## GREAT SPANGLED FRITILLARY

The *Speyeria cybele* prefers wet meadows  
and nectar from black-eyed Susans.

The female lays pale brown eggs  
near violets. The caterpillar eats,

grows beyond its skin many times,  
turns into a dark brown chrysalis.

This splits open as an adult male spreads  
wings, blood pumping to his hairy claspers.

Imagine the change: from a thing that crawls  
to a thing that flies. But the price is high.

Life is short for Fritillary males.  
They suck nectar, breed and die.

## HENSLOW'S SPARROW

I too have named a bird:  
Brewer's Hindsight.

Its habitat is worldwide  
and perhaps beyond.

If feeds on errors,  
especially those of others.

Its whistle is a falling,  
mournful "WHEEE-ooooo."

Often observed shaking its head  
at the scene of some disaster,

or on a street corner flapping its wings,  
it pecks at the other birds.

It marries forever,  
though not to the same mate.

We can observe it in old fields  
nervously scratching the earth  
like Henslow's Sparrow.

## HOME

Squirrels have faith in branches  
even when those thin limbs bend  
and dip quickly to the empty air,  
the space where squirrels live  
part of their lives, but not all.

Birds, too, believe in trees,  
that the branches will hold them.  
Not even birds can live in the air  
forever, but they must fold  
their wings to their sides and roost.

On this planet, flight is temporary.  
All of us who have enough faith  
to give our bodies to the air  
understand the trust in landing, too,  
of returning to something solid.

## HOW TO TRAIN A HORSE TO BURN

One method always works.  
Tie the horse in its stall  
and pile the old straw high.

Douse the straw, the stall,  
all the wood, all the tack.  
Open all the windows for a draft.

Stuff cigarettes up your nostrils,  
cram cotton in your ears,  
light a match and run.

Horses hate fire.  
They whinny, snort, scream.  
They buck and kick.

Flames grow in their big eyes,  
smoke chokes them,  
the hooves and flanks heat up.

Then the shoulders, the neck, the withers.  
The tail begins to burn like a torch  
whipping the bark-dark, then the mane.

Takes a long time  
to teach a horse to burn.  
They never get used to it.

But no record exists  
of one horse  
burning another.

## LARGEST LIVING ORGANISM ON EARTH

Imagine a honey mushroom  
the size of 1,665 football fields  
beneath Oregon's Malheur National Forest.  
This *Armillaria ostoyae*, this fungus,  
more animal than plant,  
sends its rhizomorphs to suck  
the water from trees.

A mushroom can have 36,000 sexes.  
Imagine a mushroom high school  
in the hallway between classes.  
Imagine the combinations, the cliques,  
the gametes, the spores, the std's,  
the constant fusions,  
the constant sound of sucking.

## LEARNING TO DRAW

The futon, open, occupies  
too much of my wife's study.  
Folded, for sitting, it would be  
comfortable, would fit the Feng Shui.

But Feng Shui fails to please  
the two Schnauzers who prefer the futon  
flat, who sit before us, staring,  
till we obey like good people.

They rule our daily lives,  
allow us, graciously, to sleep with them, tethered  
by the leashes wrapped round our wrists.

To entertain us, they write poems  
about us as if we were dogs.  
They draw us as if we held the pencil,  
as if we imagined their enormous wings.

## LOONS

1.

The U-Haul neatly splits  
their divorce—her possessions  
in the back, his up front,

the baby's spread out  
among father, mother,  
and all the grandparents.

Unlike loons, humans  
do not mate for life.  
Out brains outweigh us.

In the quiet of evening,  
we hear the loons  
far away on dark water.

Their calls sharpen the night  
as if the next word from anyone  
could bring us all to tears.

I help my son  
carry the last of the furniture  
from the lake house.

We rope everything into place,  
slam shut the truck door  
and drive away.

2.

I measure cities by noise.  
The largest roar and clatter  
regardless of the hour

and nothing short of freakish  
Nature can muffle them—  
several feet of snow before dawn, perhaps.

I have sat on porch steps  
to watch traffic in endless lines,  
have smelled bus fumes and semis,

caught the language of people  
in a hurry, mopped sweat  
from the radiating, trapped heat.

I have waited in the midst  
of thousands on six-lane  
interstates blocked with wreckage,

felt the impatience, the hostility  
take shape like a fried egg,  
grease splattering on skin,

all of us annoyed with the dead  
by the side of the road,  
who block our progress.

A city is no place for the dead.  
They are too slow, too quiet.  
They ask too much of us.

3.

And what have I done  
with my life? What  
song can I sing out

across this dark water?  
I have made of my life  
a string of words

long enough  
to reach the moon,  
far short of the sun.

I lack the elegance  
of a single loon  
swimming through shadows

of white pine on water,  
wailing to its family,  
like a ship of solid bone.

[28]

4.

Oh my children,  
I would carry you  
on my back forever,

but still you would  
swim, dive into the water  
deep as life itself

and leave me afloat  
on this dark lake  
calling your names

as if words alone  
could enfold you  
in feathery shields,

keep you safe from eagles,  
from turtles,  
from gulls.

But I cannot.  
In spite of it all,  
still I try another song,

another voice,  
one more word  
to the moon.

## MAGPIE SPRINGS

A week after water began  
bubbling up in our front yard,  
Black-billed Magpies, *Pica hudsonia*,  
claim the place, their pennants,  
black and white, flapping brightly,  
their tails, iridescent green, dipping  
like quill pens into the trickled stream.

Whenever I approach, they pause,  
cock their heads to eye me,  
but never fly off. They hop  
back a bit the closer I come.

I appreciate their presence,  
like cavalry patrolling against  
insects, small mammals, carrion.  
But they also like the cherry trees,  
and, if pressed, will eat sunflower seed  
fallen from the bird feeders.

In Europe, Magpies sometimes speak,  
tell the Europeans how to raise families,  
build pocket nests with domed roofs.  
Here, they merely drink and bathe,  
and though I ask many questions,  
they will not speak to me.

MARTHA (1 SEPTEMBER 1914)

*Ectopistes migratorius* Martha,  
the last of billions, of flocks big as cities.  
She could fly 60 miles an hour.

How many shotgun shells  
did it take to kill  
a billion passenger pigeons?  
And when we tied captured birds  
upon stools to lure others,  
why did we sew shut their eyes?

What did Martha see last  
in that September sky of Cincinnati?  
The human hand that lifted  
her feathered body,  
kept it on ice for the taxidermist?

In that morning light  
perhaps the back of her neck  
flickered from bronze to green.  
Her slate-blue head, black bill,  
Martha—pale cinnamon throat,  
white abdomen, red iris, red legs, red feet—  
she must have been some sweet pigeon.

## MOURNING CLOAK

In Cache Valley, the Mourning Cloak  
casts the first butterfly shadow of spring.

Black wings trimmed in yellow,  
does it mourn the winter passing?

In our naming, we mourn ourselves,  
wingless, stuck to the ground like snails.

“NOW THE SUN HAS COME TO EARTH”

*From Ian Campbell's "The Sun Is Burning"*  
*sung by Kate Wolf (Gold In California)*

1.

All summer we watch  
the white-lined sphinx at dusk  
gathering nectar in Bobbie's flowers.  
Bergamot seems a favorite.

The caterpillar, though, eats  
my evening primrose  
and I'd be angry save  
the metamorphosis.

On summer twilights  
I've been known to pull a lawn chair  
to a stand of evening primrose  
and stare as the yellow blossoms un-

fold like small suns  
bursting open in the dark.  
I will also watch the sphinx  
hover from flower to flower for hours.

2.

The first summer of the 21<sup>st</sup> century  
we drive the 40 miles to Ogden  
every day of May and June  
so a human sun can burn

through the cross hairs of four tattoos  
on Bobbie's body, small crosses  
nearly invisible, unlike  
the rose on her shoulder.

In the hospital waiting room,  
each day I add some pieces  
to a jigsaw puzzle, a half-formed  
schooner on a half-formed sea.

3.

On a map I have, the radiation  
fallout from the Nevada tests  
stretch like black fingers across  
the country west to east and beyond.

Utah is not visible on the map.  
Nothing but black on the spot  
where over a million people live,  
the place of “the low use segment.”

4.

I hover for weeks after, afraid  
to touch her in our bedded nights,  
afraid we will not survive  
such fierce sun come to earth.

5.

But we do.

## OLD FENCES

In wheat fields along the Bear River,  
old fences poke above the snow.  
Gray, split, broken, they mark  
boundaries meaningless to any creature  
but the humans who built them.  
Even those, when dead, have no use  
for fences, nothing left to keep in or out.

Fences never kept the moon out of the rye,  
and barbed wire never stopped a bull.  
What's a fence to crow or coyote?  
Imagine water refusing to cross a line.  
Imagine snakes looking for the gate.

Still, I admire a well-built fence,  
a hopeless detail in cosmic time.

SCARLETT PENSTEMON

*For Keith Wilson*

Bees can't see red  
but hummingbirds can  
so the scarlet penstemon  
curls its lower lip,  
picks it lover as certain  
as Cleopatra picked Caesar.

In the southern Utah summer,  
in the late afternoon  
of long shadows, shimmering,  
the scarlet penstemon pouts,  
and, oh, sweet Jesus, to be  
a broad-tailed hummingbird then.

## SHEEP

*For Ellen Meloy*

The Virgin River vanishes  
in canyon rock  
leaving tear stains  
for the mountain sheep  
who graze on stone,  
who know the earth is steep  
in every direction, who know  
geometry is merely  
the shape of stone,  
empty space,  
memory of hooves.

We want to ask  
“How can you live here?”  
But we drive fast  
past their answer,  
our attention always  
ahead of us.

## SOLITARY VIREO

A small bird, not much bigger  
than a blue-throated hummer,

the vireo sings its Latin name—  
“I am green. I am green.”

With a white circle  
around each eye

and an olive-green back,  
the vireo looks like

a rodeo horse  
taught to fly.

## THE COURAGE OF FROGS

The first time I heard that story,  
I admired the courage of the Princess.  
To touch her lips to green skin.  
To risk warts blistering her mouth.  
What if all the hidden courtiers  
were about to point and laugh?

But I learned to think otherwise,  
to measure life beyond royalty.  
What that frog must have sacrificed  
to be touched by such pale lips,  
fat and dry, beneath hairy nostrils,  
and eyes stuck to face-front vision.

To trade frog legs, able to leap 20 times their length,  
for legs like tree stumps rooted to earth,  
trade a tongue long and quick,  
give up a three-chambered heart,  
skin that breathes even under water,  
and ears connected tympanum to lungs.

I learned to measure life by loss.  
The Brooding Frog of Australia gone.  
The Golden Toad of Costa Rica gone.  
The Vegas Valley Leopard Frog,  
the Rancho Grande Harlequin Frog,  
the Mountain Mist Frog—extinct.

Death and deformation wear human masks,  
descend like angels of acid rain, ozone  
thinned to scalding, ultraviolet radiation.  
And what symbol do I imagine now?  
That Christ-like Prince of Frogs  
strung on a cross of human bone.

## THE DIGNITY OF COCKROACHES

Death comes to cockroaches  
like a foot  
wider than the ceiling.

The dying  
lift their legs  
in a last gesture,  
a memory  
of pretzel salt,  
a toothpick  
daubed with mustard,  
sugar floating  
like an oil slick on coffee.

## THE MANY BEINGS

These working class geese  
have no pedigrees beyond  
this icy reservoir dock  
where the Logan River pools  
then falls through the city  
to disappear in the west desert.  
Here these geese unload  
the ships of our pockets,  
our bread upon the water.

## THE SILLIEST DEBATE

The mountain gorillas of Bwindi  
need their legs, their arms, their hands.  
Unlike humans, they do not need syntax.

Syntax is like the grid of a city—  
we need it to find our way  
to work, to home, to school,  
to the Super WalMart with its own grid  
laid out like a Melville sentence.

Some humans claim syntax  
makes us smarter than gorillas.  
We have Maalox, Tylenol, Anusol, Viagra,  
and we can compose compound-complex  
sentences that have multiple nouns and verbs.

We are the Adamic species.  
We name everything, even “ecotourists,”  
humans who pay to watch  
the mountain gorillas of Bwindi  
sleep, eat, nurture, have a little sex.

Imagine mountain gorillas  
paying to watch humans  
run through the maze of Detroit.

## THE TARANTULA HAWK

Not a hawk at all,  
the blue and orange wasp  
hovers above desert milkweed,  
dips its legs into the milky hoods  
where pollinia weep for love  
and latch onto those thin limbs  
for a whirling lift away  
to be dropped like Ophelia  
into another milky stream,  
a dream of flight, an explosion  
of pollen.

All the spring while,  
we drive in our machines,  
stop at desert inns to sleep,  
sometimes joining, wet and heavy,  
upon dark beds, our thin skins  
glistening, our wings and hoods,  
petals, sepals, pistil, stamen.

## WATCHING THE WATERFALL

Water drops over four tiers of stones  
into a small pond full of koi  
and a solitary red water lily folds  
as the day shadows toward evening.

Tree spores parachute to the ground.  
Wasps hover above fumitory and zinnias.  
A black-capped chickadee visits the feeder.  
The Schnauzers read each tree trunk's mail.

I never planned to be here, now.  
I have lived like a river  
winding its way toward something  
ahead in the next empty space.

WHAT HAPPENS TO PANSIES IN UTAH

My wife set out three pots—  
blue pansies, yellow pansies,  
snapdragons.

“Why are there flowers  
on the picnic table?”  
I asked.

Six mule deer  
sailed over the picket fence  
like kites on a windy day.

They walked to the flowers,  
clipped each pansy neatly  
half-way down the stem.

They ruminated, snipped,  
watched me  
watching them.

“It’s a test,” my wife said.  
“I want to know what  
the deer will not eat.”

“Snapdragons,” I said.

But I felt guilty  
as if the deer and I  
were cheating,  
  
were passing notes  
with all the right answers  
while the teacher took a bath.

“I should know by morning,” my wife said.  
“Probably,” I said,  
as I smiled at the deer,

gave them that wink  
reserved for those who know  
how it all ends.

WHAT I LEARNED FROM THE JOSHUA FOREST

*"[We] gravitate toward spaces that are  
metaphors for our inner lives."*

Martha Beck, *Expecting Adam*

Where the fingers of the Mojave Desert  
touch the eastern rim of the Great Basin,  
I walked every Sunday morning  
January to May, in the mountains' shadow,  
among Joshua Trees, a forest  
growing west to the horizon  
and the empty bottom of the Basin.

Joshua leaves clump together  
like Napoleon's bayonets braced  
against a hostile world.  
Joshuas keep a distance,  
each an unwelcome neighbor,  
an angry relative—water rights  
at the root of it all.

But they have their friends.  
Yucca moths spread pollen tree to tree,  
anther to ovary, and leave their eggs.  
Red-shafted flickers nest in Joshuas,  
lizards live in the dead branches  
and woodrats chew off the leaves for beds.  
Some friends get lost—the giant sloth.

Mormon pioneers named the trees,  
but I do not believe that Joshuas pray  
or point to the Promised Land.  
I believe they surrender to the sun,  
to the arid earth, to the hot wind,  
to flickers, to the offspring of moths.  
They throw up their limbs to live.

## AFTER THE BIG BANG

Coyote and Rabbit kept talking as before  
but neither could hear the other.  
Eventually, they stopped talking.

Eventually, their stories disappeared  
and they turned into animals.  
Only skin and bones remained,  
and a hunger nothing could fill.