

Paul Gibbons

THE LOVER OF ALL THINGS MOVING

Little Engine of Want working so tirelessly in the wet branches
of the willow outside my door so late at night,
let me take you now to view the Great Fulcrum of Desire
in which the purest words are spoken in the hard, dark,
secret and sweet ejaculations of lovers on a kitchen table,

and stare past them now my Precious and Absurd Kernel
of Moderation in All Things at the smoldering coal in the field
which was a hawk just this morning before the neighbor's kids found
it tangled in a fishnet and set it both on fire and free.

You would think, oh Lucrative and Constant Apology for What is Not
Endless, that it would have cried and fluttered into the forest to hide
and resemble your cousins Give Up and Petty Jealousy
or Now the World Owes Me One that occasionally push
minor evenings into their despair

but it did not. It did not and that's all you need to know
except that this bird, which I'll just call Hawk
because of the perfection inherent in that single syllable,
went on about its business of frightening and killing
up until the moment of its death which I didn't see
but I'm sure was spectacular and blinding and final.

I would be this final, too, easy to say here
in my comfortable room and chair, but I promise you tonight
as much as I've read all the poets on my shelves
belonging to the Club of the Perfect and Unstained Sentences
that I will never stop believing in the errant and swerving escapes

of mackerel or the Hidden and Anonymous Continuation
of shadows at night still attached to us or the cheesecloth spiraled
around the blueberry bushes that are now white, frozen, and tattered
snakes

under the snow, and dancing, too,
that there is the frightening and blinding and spectacular and lovely
world to burn in like a Lover of All Things Moving
who descends from the treetops to hear us, and breathe.