

## THE HUNGER MOON

Summer is sweet on the tongue,  
soft on the shoulders as kachina clouds,  
unlasting as the corn god's shades of green.  
Yesterday when the sun centered on my roof,  
the red-tailed hawk reeled around  
that hot yellow forcing shut my eyes,  
tightening his circle and pouring down  
his cries on my doorstep.

He is back with the dawn. Down and down  
he hurls his keening like splinters of cold.  
The hawk is a prophet of the hunger moon--  
a time of no more corn,  
a time when the deer go far,  
leaving no tracks to a place no man finds.

None of us will starve, not even the hawk.  
For me, famine is of the spirit  
while the body fuels on dried fare  
and the only sweetness comes in jars. The wings  
are first to wither, then the deep singing.

Someday I will follow the hawk. I will climb  
past wilding mounds of dead-gold buckwheat.  
My foot will rattle shards of ancient lava,  
startling a pika into the dominion  
of talon and beak. I will face the she-wind  
angering in the cinder cones, prying  
at broken shadows of the sacred peaks.

There in the secret heights I will master  
the proper maintenance of wings.

POET, 1992, prize winner