

SWAMP STANDARD TIME

Long-legged appetite in courting plumage,
still as the stylus on a sundial,
the great blue heron presides
over his reflection in a round pond.

Too far away, the rings of his target
rise to the surface and spread.
The heron's leg must not quiver. He must let
the fish come trusting into the jurisdiction
of his spring-loaded waiting.

All the heron knows of speed is cocked
in the curve that propels his beak.
The feathered harpooner fires and misses.
Slowly the bird moves his blue shadow
to another quarter, reckoning the hours
in increments of hunger.