

CHEETAH IN A ZOOM LENS

She ambles past her grazing nervous prey,  
dark-spotted hunger, simile for speed--  
a chase machine, a disappearing breed.  
Blonde head aloof, she idles, seems to pay  
no heed to shuffling hoofs. She eyes a stray.  
The healthy bucks set off the herd's stampede,  
releasing her like brakes. Intentions freed  
she starts her sprint, this cat who hunts by day.

With undulating spine, this specialist,  
hind quarters pushing sixty-miles-an-hour,  
soon overtakes the antelope in dust.  
This makes her third attempt; twice now she's missed.  
She can't always succeed despite her power.  
This time she heard her cubs and knew she must.

--Glenna Holloway