

Ice Dance

ONCE, IN icy February,
I watched a flock of geese
land on a frozen lake,
land and glide across
in a great, silent dance.

Each bird put down
one webbed foot,
slid it forward,
hesitated for an instant
before shifting weight to it.
They all did this:
step, hesitate, slide.

Rising and falling together,
the whole flock waltzed forward,
each one testing the ice,
each one ensuring
the other's safety.

Not birds of the air
nor any creeping thing,
not beasts of the field
nor human kind in God's image
can safely dance alone.
The ice is too thin;
the dance is too dangerous.

Geese on a Foggy Day

FROM FALLOW fields,
from fog's ghostly gray,
they rose at first unrecognised,
a chevron of geese
on seasonal sojourn.

In ordered formation
 and splendid profusion,
 life rises up
 around inattentive me,
 and everything sings, "I AM."

Creation's cup overflows
 with a million ordinary miracles,
 like geese on a foggy day
 lifting me on the world's wild wings,
 making my heart soar.

Gardener's Eden

EARTH HAS begun to thaw.
 One purple crocus
 proclaims it.
 I can smell
 rich, wet rotteness
 as last fall's leaves
 sink into soil.
 I know that dirt
 is springing to life.

I was made of dust,
 to dust cheerfully return,
 human to humus.
 I ache to go back
 to the garden
 to sink my hands
 in the stuff of my making,
 to seek high things
 in low places.

Earth is not,
 and has never been,
 an unheavenly direction.