

Patricia Hooper

NEAR THE INTERSECTION

Yesterday,
 in the middle of January,
 a hawk swept to the road,

the road I was driving down.
 Something flashed in the windshield
 which was already wild with sun

and crashed through the branches and dove
 over the hurrying body
 of something else. I stopped

on the shoulder, watching them rise
 over the telephone wires
 into the pines where the bird

drew down its wings like a cloak,
 concealing its prize, and bent forward
 and went on with its plan. I can't

say that I didn't shudder
 in the skilled presence of death,
 but what startled me most

was the way that a curtain closed
 over something, shutting me out,
 or in, or wherever I was

this side of a ravenous darkness
 the middle of January
 in the wild sun, on the road.