

DELPHINIUM

Near the exquisite vulgarity of the chickens
delphinium casts passion
inward, until it purples
into rich targets. This one is lame, splinted up
with a split rod, quickly
like someone lit a fuse and stepped back.

All day the wind's been low static
and near the house the sound
of men fixing the chainsaw. Delphinium
could care. About this, or rain
or the chickens busy complaining, outraged
about everything, and dropping themselves
fitfully into mounds of dust. They'd bury themselves
if they could, eyeing the woods
through their little ball bearings.

The delphinium never angers.
It learns quietly, by rote: the stars
are stars. Better to keep grass down, forestalling
violence. The pine is a brother, sardonic
and plain. Genius deepens, a deep

blue thing, too rapid
to see completely. I am this blue, the delphinium knows
vaguely, I am
poisonous. The delphinium loves
the sound of that: *poisonous*, like the true gift
perpetually offered.