

Vocation · *Ben Howard*

The hay is dry. And in their innocence
Two pheasants sun themselves
In the quiet amplitude of late July.
One wonders where such calm
Originates, and what toothed beasts
Lie under. Here is the mind's
Fork in the road: for one might choose
To skate upon appearances'
Recumbent skin—or choose to turn
Inward, churning up lethal snakes,
Spiders, worms, and who knows what
Pernicious cluster. To peel back bark,
Lift rocks, and rake
The skein of complacency from things:
That is the mind's peculiar
Vocation. And yet what still
And cool elation
The stirrings of consciousness perturb and conquer.