

F A L L I N G

There is a part
of this poem where you must
say it with me, so
be ready, together we will make
it truthful, as there is gracefulness
even in the motioning of those
leafless trees, even in

such motion as descent. Fired,
I move downward through it all again
in an aquarium of debt, submerging
with the flowering electric
company, with March the 10th, 1971,
its darkness, justice and mercy

like clownfish, funnily striped.
Let them both as a matter of policy
redevour the light that
escapes them, Shakespeare
had just candles, lamps,

Milton had only the
dark, and what difference? as
poetry, like failure, is fathered
in any intensity of light, and light
in all thicknesses of darkness,

as your voice, you out there,
wakes now, please, to say
it with me: There
are descents more final, less graceful
than this plummeting
from employment; it is the middle of a false

thaw, the ice undercoating
of a bare branch is
in the midst of falling. Where
can it all be put except
in this poem, under us, breaking this fall,
itself falling
while breaking it? Look
at this line, stretching out, breaking even as it
falls to this next, like a suicide,
the weather singing
past his face, and arising to kill him
this first last line in weeks.