

But certain hollowness, or fluid
thickening in time,
draws the roots of secret hair
down to a level of lava-blood
erupting beneath the skin:
a boiling we can hear
rapid and delicate, yet
heavy-footed as the stars

the sound of small birds drowning
or mice eaten by green owls.

COLD WIND

John Thompson

In this country
the wind kills
with swift birds
like bronze javelins.

They say don't
mistake its images,
learn the beat of its cold wing,
the strain of its sinews
gathering on the haft.

And then they tell
of those who got the music
into their marrow:
the old men who outdid its terror,
beating their tongues like oak leaves
against its fierce metal.

men with the straight eye
insomniac,

the stubborn song
fast in the bone.