

EDWARD LOBB
RESURGAM

The bird lay in the road more than a week,
Run over now and then by trucks and cars—
Tire-flattened, dust-embalmed, sun-dried,
A feathered pancake in the summer light.
I passed it every day. It bothered me.
Things die: no news there. This was different,
A blot on the blank beige of the dirt road,
A useless, obscene ex-bird.
Finally I scooped it up with a spade,
And, humming a little tune by Gounod,
Carried the corpse to my back yard
And tossed it on a pile of burning brush.
The feathers caught and curled up one by one,
Pale flames at noon, like letters from an old love.
It burned, then glowed, a briquet.
Smoke formed a bird-shape which I saw
Reflected in the dark window of the shed.
It rose and disappeared, and that was all.

NO TITLE

It's a kind of improv, they said, so just
make it up as you go along—the things
you say and do, actions, reactions.

A bit of awkwardness is good, it's real.
Think Chekhov: whether it's comedy or
tragedy is mostly point of view,

and every role is equally important,
at least if you're the one who's playing it.
Even the mumbly old guy has a point.

Background: Canadian (yes, I know,
but there it is), white, middle class,
Christian at birth. The rest is up to you.

Your first scene is nude, but *tasteful*, see?
You pick up other wardrobe along the way,
and opportunities for this and that,

and a few curve balls that you don't expect.
You'll get the feel of it after a while,
but if you don't, don't worry about it;

you're not the only one, believe me.
I am not ready for this, I told them.
Perfect, they said.

I staggered through it like a drunk
in an abandoned house at midnight.
The reviews were mixed. I think it was

that comedy/tragedy thing again.

SPIN

Sometimes I wonder what people think of me,
but generally I don't much care.

It seems that people want a simple image
Gertrude Stein said so often that she

was a genius that eventually
those who knew her fell in line and said

it themselves, though the evidence was scanty.
So if anyone asks about me,

just say, "Why, he's a saint, the kindest man in
the world." It has a nice clear outline,

and the details don't matter.