

## SOME DETAILS OF AUTUMN

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*James McCorkle*

If you came this way, the fields would be bare,  
Machinery idle in their shadows. What we learned  
Needs explanation; it is a domain like the clouds  
That accumulate in brilliance and weight

Over cities, all day adding to the scaffoldings  
We find ourselves on, always the same,  
But older, the heart split, its ghost in the fields

Near the route you took, among the comings-and-goings  
Of hours, filling the days like knots  
Of people at evening around a radio, listening  
To reports issued for their region, counting

The hours, watching the wind's direction. All around  
Us the days chart straight lines, and write in a hand  
We can't follow, mistaking one sign for another.  
You watch the birds circling over the river

And say this could be another sign, we'll never know  
But make a guess about their cursives of flight.  
How they wheel above us in the clear light,

Scatter through the dead pear trees, high over the fields  
Crisscrossed by ditches and hedges, narrowing the  
distances  
Between themselves and the horizon. Nothing intervenes.  
The wreckage piles up day by day, where

The birds sang in the orchards in their rejoicings  
Of solitude, where badgers and squirrels scrambled  
In the torn browns of autumn. The hours in concert

With our dreams hammer the wreckage in the foothills  
And in the cities, the air grown sodden with blows.  
And you—

    because you are always the last one we speak  
        to, barely remembering your name—  
Vanish, the air colder, windless. Then

Among the broken chairs and glasses we shout  
At Iambê to keep dancing, for the air to warm again,  
To become a symbol from where all the stories begin.