

2000

# For the Falconer

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FOR THE FALCONER

The hunt—was good; the kill,

less so, as you'd said to  
expect. I don't listen, always—

Plus the noise. Plus distraction:

the dogs, naturally, the boys  
whose job it is to hem and then

beat at the brush, driving  
the animal in, closer, towards  
the men, the men beautifully

negotiating their mounts  
meanwhile. Which part

don't you understand? Also

arrowheads, here a rainwashed  
and single bone, relics everywhere  
chipped and for the naming:

*I love and I mean to and*

—others. You'd said patience,  
you'd said vigilance—*Watch,*

*something will break through.*

And indeed: first a pheasant,  
then a fox, then a smallish

deer—each one of which no  
sooner had stepped, panicking,

from cover,

the men would  
bring, as they say, the game down. . . .

But none of these

what I'd wanted,  
or want now.

I am not patient, as I'd  
said to expect. You don't  
listen, always—Plus the horns,

plus the banners: of blue,

for diminishment, pale

resurrection yellow, already

the moon like a slightly  
uptilted boat tugging  
doggedly its soon-to-be-dark

cargo. And meanwhile, plenty  
of light, still—

each could still see the other;  
it would be entire;  
and all at once—

Which part had you hoped  
to hear: the boys at last done

with beating? the dogs leashed,  
done retrieving? the men,

but now more distantly giving shout?

The field is yours, that  
I stagger back to.

(come)

(what it most sounded like)

(plunder)