2000

Near the Intersection

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Yesterday,
in the middle of January,
a hawk swept to the road,

the road I was driving down.
Something flashed in the windshield
which was already wild with sun

and crashed through the branches and dove
over the hurrying body
of something else. I stopped

on the shoulder, watching them rise
over the telephone wires
into the pines where the bird

drew down its wings like a cloak,
concealing its prize, and bent forward
and went on with its plan. I can’t

say that I didn’t shudder
in the skilled presence of death,
but what startled me most

was the way that a curtain closed
over something, shutting me out,
or in, or wherever I was

this side of a ravenous darkness
the middle of January
in the wild sun, on the road.