The Feather

Hillary J. Gardner*
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"This is my plan: 4 sections, an eternity, an unraveling, an echoing and a deeper whence..."

—Dr. P.

1.
I met a man who liked his whences soft
in the hotel room, legs
wide open against the snow and every where
a quiet falling.
We two unraveled round each other
once, falling faster than the snow,
gathering up the other and rolling forward before
our memories and past and careful selves
caught up to us, before time came back

and pressed its dark face against the window.

2.
I am a whence, he was a thence, she was a since.

There's not much in life that happens easily—strangers—strangeless—lessons—going past...

Going past the forest of ice—
careful around the branches the clear dimension.

The frost—giving the field back its yellow—
tongue of winter over the field—
icicles hanging off the signs on the interstate.

The v of birds...
3.

"The v of birds is still incredible— but you can’t watch it—
because it just remains a v, it doesn’t
change into a miracle. It just happens."

_I have a friend who comes to me_
_with a feather from a duck,
possibly a wood-duck, I don’t know,

_and she says, The black and white
careful flecks spreading out in bold
and open hatchet marks exploding at the tip…

why write poetry?
…or she may have said, I’ll never write
anything as beautiful.

4.

Somewhere I have, out there far from its original purpose,
a secret that explains me, fallen off like the feather from the duck.