

## Wind

FOR RICHARD FORD

Water perfectly calm. Perfectly amazing.  
Flocks of birds moving  
restlessly. Mystery enough in that, God knows.

You ask if I have the time. I do.  
Time to go in. Fish not biting  
anyway. Nothing doing anywhere.

When, a mile away, we see wind  
moving across the water. Sit quiet and  
watch it come. Nothing to worry about.

Just wind. Not so strong. Though strong enough.  
You say, "Look at that!"  
And we hold on to the gunwales as it passes.

I feel it fan my face and ears. Feel it  
ruffle my hair – sweeter, it seems,  
than any woman's fingers.

Then turn my head and watch  
it move on down the Strait,  
driving waves before it.

Leaving waves to flop against  
our hull. The birds going crazy now.  
Boat rocking from side to side.

"Jesus," you say, "I never saw anything like it."

"Richard," I say –

"You'll never see that in Manhattan, my friend."

## MID-COUNTRY BLOW

All night and all day the wind roared in the trees,  
Until I could think there were waves rolling high as my bedroom floor;  
When I stood at the window, an elm bough swept to my knees;  
The blue spruce lashed like a surf at the door.

The second dawn I would not have believed:  
The oak stood with each leaf stiff as a bell.  
When I looked at the altered scene, my eye was undeceived,  
But my ear still kept the sound of the sea like a shell.

