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from Vanishing Point

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I

The instant before it disappears
along the apex of a roof
where a collared dove
ululates to an apple tree
grey as the lead
beak caught in the sun
or the honeysuckle where
nothing moves and a blackbird
pipes back to the light
in next door's garden
with ridges the colour
of a sandstone cloud-top
when they settle into strata
struts its feathers and becomes

II

a strut of feather and a thing becoming
bird of prey or gull or shape seen
from below to grow to various
classes of W or M in a child's painting
that might be mapped by Pappus
of Alexandria elegantly on to itself
or whether the observer catches
or prefers to catch
the upstroke or the down
know that this instant oscillates
between two isomorphs and is neither yet
just before the sun sets
and shadows throw
their doubt about like weight

III

where doubt abouts and waits
like a lorry-filled summer-air
greasing through a restricted-opening
window on the foul night of motorway
service station where dark is
broken by the three am truck horn
of a fat driver turning in his cab
mid-sleep perhaps by accident
and catching it with his foot
at the critical moment just
to wake a father from his sleep
in time to catch his youngest
in the turn of headlights
as the light searches in the corners