

january

i

the year comes round
to a stick of wood
decaying on the forest floor

what birds remain
are mute
they endure

the bitter cold
with puffs
and shudders

food gnaws
at memory
shrivelled berries

must suffice
the limbs hang low
from the weight of ice

ii

imagine this snow
as the essence
and source

of all that is to come
the comfort
of the lighted green

in full bloom
the incessant careen
from bank to bank

in the southern course
of every melted drop
the smooth stone

the marrow
in each
creature's bone

January (cont.)

iii

the overcast
hides every star
sap is weary

for leaf
and bud
the night

is near
the sun
is far

the silence
is like
coursing blood

ice and snow

cranes and cows

i

ice and snow
cranes and cows
and crows

ii

cranes and crows
ice and snow
and cows

iii

cows and crows
snow and ice
and cranes

iv

snow and ice
crows and cranes
ice and snow

v

compare
the outsized
sighs

of the cranes
to the outsized
sighs

of the cows

ecology 101

no fish
in fish lake

no otters
in otter creek

no seals
on seal rock

no birds
in birdland

no whales

rembrandt at the huntington

lines as fine
as webs of spiders
etched upon
the copper plate

leave behind
their trace of shadow
clouds across
the haybarn gate

next to christ
most and least human
stretched upon
dark-timbered crosses

the artist's face
his own self-portrait
lined with equal
human losses

how can thin lines
be light and darkness
who hangs beside
our dying lord

the lightly sketched
frail human figure
of beggar woman
with a gourd

lines while walking

someone
swings

a hammer
and the sound—

so strong
so square

so straight
so true—

resounds
across the valley

i wish
our lives

could be
so strong

so square
so straight

so true