

# Brian Swann

## BIRDS IN THE WOODS

Silence is involved in itself as  
loads of light float down white  
as the flames that lighted on  
the disciples with the gift  
of tongues. Just after dawn,  
I'm waiting for sleep to unravel  
just enough so I can speak  
in a voice still not mine, one  
perhaps like the carpenter's  
down the road who makes  
models that may not look  
like much you recognize,  
but work. What does it take  
to scrap the patterns and  
start again? There are things  
I know but have never seen  
or heard, syllables self-effacing,  
interlocking but but quite  
consistent, solid, but not quite  
there. I like it when culverts  
trail after the streams they're  
built to contain; when after  
storms great cords of water  
interweave, or get torn apart  
again but you wouldn't know it.  
It could be the same thing,  
forces forming and reforming.  
When the time comes I'd  
like to be something like that.  
Things will continue to wear  
themselves out, but still  
be standing. Birds will sing  
in the woods but the woods  
will be gone.