

**WE GET UP EARLY TO EXPLORE GRANPA'S
STORAGE SHED**

We chased ghosts from the salt-and-pepper air
Of dawn, my sister waiting on the stair,
With fearful eyes, for me to hold my breath
And break the flannel dust that smelled of death.

A young girl's portrait watched from yellowed glass.
A noise! We saw a thousand starlings pass
The frosted panes, dim shadows of themselves,
As floorboards stirred and dust dropped from the shelves.

They settled to the ground, a cloud of sound,
And drove their beaks against the frozen ground.
Discovering seed, they lifted pin-sharp eyes
To specks yet loitering about the skies.

We crouched in fear and backed into a lair
Of hay and burlap sacks. There, mumbling prayers,
We bargained generously with God until,
As always, Grandma rose to do His will.