

Straw

Cathy A. Gileadi-Sweet

The straw of the cut grain
Gold mounding the hill
On the way down from my house
On the mountain

Like the round of my two-year-old's head
Just after a haircut
I run my hand over it wrong way
Feel it stubble under my palm

Think of a mouse hiding
In the straw on the hill
Shouldering the shadow of a hawk
Scuttering from shock to shock

Think of the robin crying
On my front walk
His strangled mate limp
On the railroad ties by the edge of the lawn
Her song caught in her mouth

It begins to rain on my child and me
I hold him in the autumn sunset
His shock of hair scented wet like straw

The deer have not found the tomatoes and peppers
We hid among the flowerbeds
I wonder if they'll ripen

The older children come one by one
To sit on the steps in the rain with us
We shoulder each other
Wordless, close together
Our toes outward, a circle of light
We have
No shadows in the setting sun