

## Faint-hearted Longing

From my study window, I watch house sparrows  
leap up to follow the cloud-high skeins  
of feathered nomads passing over.  
The small birds flutter to the edge of vague  
uncertainty where they lose heart and turn back again.

With feigned gaiety, they land on my windowsill  
and pretend delight at crumbs of bread.  
I lean my forehead against the glass  
and watch their charade with empathy,  
and I whisper again my hollow promise.

The sparrows and I busy and distract  
ourselves through the day, but night finds us  
restless in our beds awaiting sleep  
and listening for the geese adventuring south --  
soaring through even the blackest black --  
each heralding and cheering his own quest.