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DON MCKENZIE

POEM FOR A FAVORITE POET

the words are swift and clean:
 small birds
 dawn-silver pale pure blue
 bright birds
 for breaking quietly the heart
 (the mind dies into terrible stone):
 little birds
 for whom the dew is utterable:
 your words
 flung swiftly sweet down robust vastnesses. . . .

your thoughts
 (gay child-thoughts riding
 bareback galloping gayly the unworded
 universals)
 are a shimmer of steel sweeping the amazed air.

there is in you something
 of furrows in the wet spring of
 wild bright plunging
 pistons
 and of sunlight smoothness.

you are a child running
 fleet in the sharp mist of morning
 (naked feet in zestful stinging grass)
 a little child
 gone gathering wonders for a wise delight.

with certain sudden sentences
 you startle
 you playfully undo our careful world.

From *Pagany, a Native Quarterly*,
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