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## Wild Turkeys, First Light

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## Wild Turkeys, First Light

Brown-bodied, forward-thrusting,  
in and out of a hillside's undergrowth,  
they Egypt-walk: three strutters, after rain  
syncopating to jazz from a kitchen window—  
Carlos Santana's "Smooth"—as they inch  
onto lawns to pluck first-shoot grasses.

Unhurried as heat, these have come down  
past surveyors' stakes, past deer-printed mud,  
between a wrecked ship of V-ed oaks initialed  
by lovers. Having taken time into account,  
they are timeless and present as in a drawing  
by Audubon or a field guide: each blatant bird

emblematic of species. One displays, trills,  
at tangential scent or threat. Maybe I seem  
less predator than curiosity-white-robed,  
behind a scrim of screen-but I'm watched  
with more than passing interest. Maybe seeing  
is believing to a turkey and it helps to be standing

as still as this rinsed-perfect summer air. Still,  
my backlit shape must be more startling than God's:  
They move off in a pattern resembling an S,  
having surveiled the treeline like operatives  
in service of whatever secret causes the biggest one  
to shake as if flesh were burdensome in any light.