

## DAVID HOPES

### *The Nest of Starlings*

I wanted to see what  
bubbled in the bird box  
like bacon in a black iron skillet.  
He made as to come. He shut  
his book and took a stick he used for walks.  
He doesn't know sage from millet,  
robin-plantain from the front yard phlox,  
and I went out alone.  
He stood at the window, looking.  
I knew without looking back.  
Outside him where the sun shone,  
she-starling startled from her home  
knocked me flat upon my back.  
I was stunned. I had to crawl  
a pace before I could get up,  
and he saw me.  
He saw it all  
behind the black back sill  
where he pretended not to be.

I struck the box and the chicks were still.