

COMBINE

Morning scratches at the icy window,
chisels pristine and crystal reminders
that the harvest hasn't ended unless
the workers have gathered in all the sheaves.
We, armed with thermoses of black coffee,
tapes of Beethoven, Bach and Andrew Crouch,
mount the great harvester-beast two by two.

We look more like pilots in a cockpit
than dirt farmers about to tame the land.
We perch in the cab like captains guiding
an enormous ship safely out to sea.
Great crows, sea gulls of the fields, lead the way.
The air is laced with smells of ripe sorghum,
the brittle sounds of corn stalks snapping in the wind.

We bring the fields to their knees, move through
the long rows like some giant sloth inching
its way, belly-deep, through the ornaments
of corn and barley, wheat and sunflower -
all the weighty symbols of bread and wine
waiting to be harvested for them that sing.
We do not go among them unnoticed.

We leave nothing in our wake but stubble.
Even the crows will not have it. The fields
look gaunt and hungry, lean as death itself.
What once bloomed with honey has paled white,
dusty as the dry ferns crumbling along the Platte.
But in the silos outside of town
are seeds enough to reach the very moon.

6-Cornfield Review