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**March 6, 2014**

Cold wind abates.  
Sunshine breaks clouds apart,  
penetrates my second-story windows,  
casts brilliant warmth,  
restless hope.

I place my guitar on its stand,  
gather insulted vest,  
gloves, wool hat,  
Laura,  
drive down the hill  
to Tumalo Park  
walk up the river again,  
like we did day before yesterday  
in warm sunshine and gentle wind.

We walk across the grass toward the river,  
watch two Canada geese near the river  
and, farther upstream, two more.

“Have they started to nest?”

“Probably. I don’t know.  
Ask them. See what they say.”

Geese jump from the rock  
into fast, bumping current,  
float down  
swim up  
climb out  
onto the rock again  
jump into the current again.

“They’re playing,  
having fun in the current.”

“I would if I could.  
Too shallow, too cold for me.”

Clouds close the sky again.  
Cold wind increases,  
drives small, cold drops of rain  
into us.

“If I had long underwear bottoms,  
I would be warm enough.”

We walk to the river

“It might rain harder.  
We’re not dressed for it.”

We walk back toward the car,  
glad to be out here, but cold.

High above us,  
against blowing grey clouds,  
a red-tailed hawk hunts the wind,  
watches park grass  
willows along the river,  
for movement of small prey,  
moves muscles to adjust feathers  
moves one wing down a little  
and then the other  
constantly adjusting  
floats stationary  
against shifting wind  
turns  
blows down  
the wind a quarter-mile  
turns  
hangs above brush-covered cliffs,  
watching for small animals  
running in cold wind and rain  
over black rock

out of twisting brush  
into enough openness  
for sudden, diving capture  
cold wind feasting.

Our car still holds warmth.  
I turn on the windshield wipers.

“Being out here briefly  
was better than not being out at all.”

“I love rain and wind  
but maybe sunshine even better.”