

HOW BIRDS GET LOST: III

The idea that all parents teach their young to fly
Is torn apart easily in the strong claws
And beak full of death.

Even as a species
We are not consistent.
The gentle Trobriand Islanders
Watch calmly
Their children walking into the sea
Or a cooking fire.

Once in Asia
By Eliot's brown god
I watched two Buddhists
Impassive, accepting
Their young family drowning.

Meanwhile Americans panic
At the appearance of a rash
Or the non-appearance of genius
At age three. Anxiety spreads
Among the adults.

We are the slow cage builders
Watching the evolution of our damage.
The secret of flight forgotten
And the idea gradually fading
In the genes
The memory
Of sky becomes a question
Asked of itself
In an endless
And vacant
School.

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