Selection from *brieflybriefly*

Disappearance

No hymns soothed
that small dark kitchen
where light was a stranger
in a plum-colored suit.

Tin coffee pot perking,
table set on plastic cloth,
sour cream and cucumbers,
floral apron neatly pressed -

my grandmother 1954
home all day alone
for centuries
until she disappeared.

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Selection from *brieflybriefly*

Delivery

I move into the pose: bend, stretch, breathe
    feel body and mind attempt escape

morning news: six-year-old boy, hand broken
    by his father's torturer, two-thousand refugees

stranded in no-man's land
    my joints fight September's chill

a phone call: my mother tells me she cannot see -
    only blurs and memories

across the room, braid of sunlight - a bird chisels
    at the windowpane, wings aflutter

disappears, re-appears from that blue above the green
    soars to a neighbor's roof, a sign

above his side-door: *Deliveries*
    descends, looks in at me again, black-seed eyes

press against the pane as if my small, constructed world
    promises permanence or safety – while I desire

that rope of light: ascend, descend, gold to green
    and back again - *Deliver Us* I read

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Selection from *brieflybriefly*

The Weight of Birds

Even the soul
      though beautiful
            and weightless
                  is not free

except perhaps
      in the warm womb
            newly hatched
                 into otherness

but even then
      tethered
            by that blood-red thread
                to history.

Everything tries
      to hold us
            though we emerge
                complete

Cut adrift
      most ourselves
            asleep or alone
                in perfect stillness

as if perched   on the shore
      of a pond   at dusk
            to find one's self
                submerged

then afloat
      finally
            aloft

Selection from *brieflybriefly*

Paris to Basel

The light on you as you lay, slim-hipped and nineteen
in that attic room where we planned peaceful revolution
dreamed the farm in Vermont, red barn and green meadow
as in a child's drawing, children skating on the pond,
hogans beneath Wisconsin stars, hike from Paris to Basel
(following the young Engels who arrived two months too late
for his meeting), manifestos and poetry, a better world
our simple "to-do" list –
those shafts of gold hiding in shadow
the room's dust and confusion,
illuminating as in the Old Masters
what we're meant to see