

For Spacious Skies

My government poisons
starlings, hundreds dropped,
emptied the sky,
covered the sidewalks
and roads. How could
anyone continue on
with that day, step over
them, or drive on through?
And I tell myself
it's somewhere else,
another state.
Somewhere Else.

Then New Year's Eve, another
somewhere, fireworks too loud
and blackbirds flew into
each other, trees, our
buildings, our signs,
our roads, a mass heart
attack, usually such a singular
end, alone with your heart
betraying you, holding out,
not willing to give you
your next moment,
the falling of fear.

I wonder how loud it has to get
to stop all hearts
at once and what will there be
to celebrate about
my country when
poetry no longer flies
but leaves me
to look to the ground
around me for my
sky, to my own feet
for heaven.

Jill Williams