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## Morning, Sickling

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## Morning, Sickling

A black dawn this morning,  
but feeling pastoral,  
I ventured out  
in spite.

The air was gone,  
at first--  
then became solid,  
creeping beads across  
my tight forehead.

I tried an apostrophe:  
"O wind, rend the heat--"  
that didn't work.

The lifeless air  
matched my thoughts,  
forging on like a lost soldier.  
I flailed,  
wielding the sickle blindly,  
trying to lay the sharp  
bitter grass low.

Thick roots seemed to ooze,  
bent, buckled  
before my masterful strokes.  
But I heaved and sighed,  
sweat flowing freely,  
coating my hands, neck,  
hardening ribs,

and the strokes came slower,  
stiffer,  
duller...stopped, I cleared my vision  
with a swipe of shaking forearm.

No light yet.  
O wind, get over here already.

Mark Harris