

First Wrens

How much can they say to each other
beyond, Come back. Food. This is here and that
is there. We alone plot our lives out
together, standing always this close
together. On the frayed, broad wire
ground is a perilous journey succumbed to.
Sight is precious, delirious on the wide
wire that is longer than any life.
I once told you that life is proportionate
to wingspan. You beat your arms quickly
in the snow where you fell until I,
a little dazed from my own fall
and frightened as always of all things alive,
still living, painfully, lifted you
in my one good hand, brushed clear
your ice-covered eyes, listened then,
as you're fond of saying, for the first time,
to your cries: Come back. Food. I
am here and you are there and it was then
and for a long while after everything.

PADDY MCGALLUM