

An Old Story

by Richard Hague

The blade flashed quick and that
was that: blood bubbled up from
his wrists like a spring
from hickory hillside.
Life left his eyes, crows
flying slow to roost.

He lay two months in thick brier
till the weather broke. A hunter found him,
shouted, threw up: the mess of his
face, crow-torn,
fox-gnawed, what there was of it.

Power will endure,
outlasting death's marks
on the down slope of survival
like a trail of fading deer prints.
And though dark, it condenses
a long time in the heart,
as a coal seam makes stone of sun's fire
for millions of years, then, exploded
from the mountain, blazes and lets it go.