

The Lark Ascending

Nigel Kennedy is in the kitchen,
where all best talk happens,
trying to tell me something,

I think he wants to bring me
late spring at Llanmadoc,
on my back, on clover, reading

invisible ink on a blue page,
at my ear the tick, tick
of an ant's path through grass,

no, he wants to tell me of the murder
of larks, not an exaltation,
three thousand slaughtered daily,

mostly sent to France,
no, elongated arpeggio,
listen can't you!

something wants to be said
then said and said again,
something I can't catch,

can't see at all,
till the song comes clear,
till the whole thing flickers,

tumbles, spirals, stroboscopic,
drops like a stone,
falls as news, the edge of everything,

like that rap on the door,
a shout from upstairs,
my thoughts that will not settle

long enough to let the full strings
back him up. The milkman on the step,
has Neil Young on his radio

and something in that soaring
Heart of Gold lets Nigel Kennedy
smile at me

over the hum of milkfloat,
the whirr and weight of memory,
the tricky, glittering flight toward the new.

Maura Dooley