Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy’s Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota

By James Wright

Over my head, I see the bronze butterfly,
   Asleep on the black trunk,
   Blowing like a leaf in green shadow.
Down the ravine behind the empty house,
The cowbells follow one another
Into the distances of the afternoon.
To my right,
In a field of sunlight between two pines,
The droppings of last year’s horses
Blaze up into golden stones.
I lean back, as the evening darkens and comes on.
A chicken hawk floats over, looking for home.
I have wasted my life.


Source: Above the River: The Complete Poems and Selected Prose (1990)