

# Mechanism

By A. R. Ammons

Honor a going thing, goldfinch, corporation, tree,  
morality: any working order,  
animate or inanimate: it

has managed directed balance,  
the incoming and outgoing energies are working right,  
some energy left to the mechanism,

some ash, enough energy held  
to maintain the order in repair,  
assure further consumption of entropy,

expending energy to strengthen order:  
honor the persisting reactor,  
the container of change, the moderator: the yellow

bird flashes black wing-bars  
in the new-leaving wild cherry bushes by the bay,  
startles the hawk with beauty,

flitting to a branch where  
flash vanishes into stillness,  
hawk addled by the sudden loss of sight:

honor the chemistries, platelets, hemoglobin kinetics,  
the light-sensitive iris, the enzymic intricacies  
of control,

the gastric transformations, seed  
dissolved to acrid liquors, synthesized into  
chirp, vitreous humor, knowledge,

blood compulsion, instinct: honor the  
unique genes,  
molecules that reproduce themselves, divide into

sets, the nucleic grain transmitted  
in slow change through ages of rising and falling form,  
some cells set aside for the special work, mind

or perception rising into orders of courtship,

territorial rights, mind rising  
from the physical chemistries

to guarantee that genes will be exchanged, male  
and female met, the satisfactions cloaking a deeper  
racial satisfaction:

heat kept by a feathered skin:  
the living alembic, body heat maintained (bunsen  
burner under the flask)

so the chemistries can proceed, reaction rates  
interdependent, self-adjusting, with optimum  
efficiency—the vessel firm, the flame

staying: isolated, contained reactions! the precise and  
necessary worked out of random, reproducible,  
the handiwork redeemed from chance, while the

goldfinch, unconscious of the billion operations  
that stay its form, flashes, chirping (not a  
great songster) in the bay cherry bushes wild of leaf.

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