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Mail Order

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MAIL ORDER

You work alone at the shop
on the second floor above the grocery.
It smells of sawdust, paint and rain.
On school vacations I come with you
and at the shipping table you show me
what I will do.

Your hands
dwarf mine, wrapping screws in cellophane.
You fill the window feeders
and the evening grosbeaks flock
as soon as your back is turned.

Hours go by.
This is a small town, no traffic, no noise.
Only the flutter of black and yellow wings.
At lunchtime you turn on the radio.
I smooth the waxed paper
from the edges of the bread.

We work till five,
you in the back room spraying feeders,
and me separating labels saying
Fragile, This End Up, Do Not Crush.