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Monarchs

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MONARCHS

Near Papillion, Nebraska, now and driving
across the bridge over Papio Creek with one swallow
and two meadowlarks, nine of them head into the wind
toward the goldenrod, sunflowers and Queen Anne's Lace.
I slow down to recall all the butterflies that once
flew against the windshield of my car and died
falling into a rush of air behind me. They pass
before me flying only the song of their colors
with the flowers. My eyes fill with the only voice
they know, brief days. What the monarchs say is
what I repeat, rising, resigning and falling on
any warm prairie day. Old loves, new friends all
fit into a small dominion where snow will come.
Bright flowers at the feet of mastodons encased
in milleniums of ice.