In the Garden

Karen Kelley
In the Garden

in the dewy mesh
of string bean leaves

I find a bird so used
to precision flight

that its tangle
in the furious wheels

of a passing car
must mark its only,

fatal,
miscalculation.

The flight feathers
beneath the snapped wing
tremble like petals
of new squash buds,

the shiny eyes still
black as marigold seeds.

Come back, I whisper,
but it can not hear me,

is empty
as a hollow wing bone.

Tied to tomato stakes,
white rags
shudder and mimic flight,
fall back,
earthbound imposters
pinned like laundry on a line.

I pluck the bird
from the leaves.

make a nest of squash vines
and bury it like a bulb,

knowing that if I wait
long enough

something made of the bird's
will to taste the marigolds

will be yielded up
from the dense earth

copper-winged and
whole.