

## Pleasant Sounds

The rustling of leaves under the feet in woods and under hedges;

The crumpling of cat-ice and snow down wood-rides, narrow lanes,  
and every street causeway;

Rustling through a wood or rather rushing, while the wind halloos in  
the oak-top like thunder;

The rustle of birds' wings startled from their nests or flying unseen  
into the bushes;

The whizzing of larger birds overhead in a wood, such as crows,  
puddocks, buzzards;

The trample of robins and woodlarks on the brown leaves, and the  
patter of squirrels on the green moss;

The fall of an acorn on the ground, the pattering of nuts on the hazel  
branches as they fall from ripeness;

The flirt of the groundlark's wing from the stubbles - how sweet such  
pictures on dewy mornings, when the dew flashes from its brown  
feathers.

by John Clare

## The Day the Dragons Won the Lottery

The day the dragonry won the lottery  
they got staggery, swiggery, blotto-ry,  
ziggery-zaggery, teetery, tottery,  
proudly swaggery,  
draggery faggery,  
loudly braggery. Rich or what-ery?  
When the dragonry won the lottery.

Oops! A snagger...Oh no nottery!  
Just a tenner is all they gottery.  
What a calamity! Sniffery snottery.  
This is most certainly not what it ought to be.  
Cursery, slaggery, weepery, watery.  
Utterly agony. Heckery! Rottery!  
When the dragonry won the lottery.

By Nick Toczek

## A Martian Sends a Postcard Home

Caxtons are mechanical birds with many wings  
and some are treasured for their markings..

they cause the eyes to melt  
or the body to shriek with pain

I have never seen one fly, but  
sometimes they perch on the hand.

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Mist is when the sky is tired of flight  
and rests its soft machine on the ground:

then the world is dim and bookish  
like engravings under tissue paper.

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Rain is when the earth is television  
it has the property of making colours darker.

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Model T is a room with the lock inside ...  
a lock is turned to free the world

for movement, so quick there is a film  
to watch for anything missed.

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But time is tied to the wrist  
or kept in a box ticking with impatience.

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In homes a haunted apparatus sleeps,  
that snores when you pick it up.

If the ghost cries, they carry it  
to their lips and soothe it to sleep

with sounds. A yet they wake it up  
deliberately, by tickling with a finger.

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Only the young are allowed to suffer  
openly. Adults go to a punishment room

with water, but nothing to eat.  
They lock the door and suffer the noises

alone. No one is exempt  
and everyone's pain has a different smell.

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At night, when all the colours die,  
they hide in pairs

and read about themselves ...  
in colour, with their eyelids shut