

## My Heart

is a caged animal, part  
canary, part cheetah.

The bird in me flutters, feels the futility  
in longing for flight, for the eggshell  
blueness of sky, its wisps of white,  
for belonging to a flock  
much bigger than the self.

What seeks the perch  
in me—willow, cedar, oak—  
what seeks the branch and bramble  
of my nesting days, sings,

part tuneless wish, part wistful  
yearning, some small measure of hope.

The beast in me prowls the perimeter,  
constantly pacing this wall  
of bars, peering out, snarling,  
remembering the wind,  
the grassy plains, the Serengeti.

How the gazelle's slender legs  
would tip-toe through the grass. Two leaps  
only to meet in mid-air. My heart  
was once that fast.