

Roofers / Michael Hill

Materializing in the soft, gray glow
of morning, a small flock
has come to alight atop a house
across the alley. Like woodpeckers,

they drum out intricate rhythms
through the early hours, their busy music
echoing about the neighborhood
as they pry up and turn loose

the old shingles, scattering them to the air
like tumbling blackbirds. No sooner
have they stripped the roof bare
then they begin feathering it anew,

their voices raised in birdsong
as they call, respond, and call again
to each other along the down-slope
of afternoon. Once they're done,

they drop from their perches
to tidy up the shingle-littered lawn,
then take flight, their wing-beats receding
as a dusky quiet descends.

Michael Hill / Fort Collins, Colorado

A 50/50 Contest Honorable Mention Poem