**Winter Hunt**

Ed Stevens

Thin cloud-shards scroll

the bright heartland cold,

dragging memory along like the flaccid tail

of some shabby kite.

He turns his face to a cold small sun

and wonders at the shadow source.

Tiny hopping birds and emerald crystal grass

await the parching night.

Frozen wind, gun-metal chill

in his leather hand,

Brittle barbs, fence and trees, the woodlands

mark his passage.

No shot is sent, no jet of blood,

but a vision of old years waits -

a sharp-shinned hawk with shining eyes -

to drop, wings tucked, like an angry blade.