

Benedictions
by James Clarke

Sometimes when the world breaks over you
like a dark wave, distils the last small drop
of hope within your veins & baffled, you no
longer know where to turn or how to pray –

a sudden gift: bubbles of light on the ribbed
hull of a gold leaf along your way; a marsh
hawk, poised and imperious, white rump on
a pole in the belly of a bush, kee kee keeling into

the cool & colourless air; or on a bare fall night
furred with frost & just beyond your windowsill
a spill of stars, brilliant as the eyes of children,
earth's sweet-tongued orisons that nudge you

out of self, unlatch the chamber of your cold-
dumb heart, utter your own unspoken prayer.