

52 hawks

driving through muskogee, highway 62
is barbed wire. impossible not to mention
matthew shepard. not to mention orlando.

dusk silenced, we fuck in the vw
to prove something, we're alive at least,
and long enough to drain the car battery.

sleep then wake to a nightstick.
good luck, a cop's jumpstart west
from a dawn mourning too red. the hawk

must be a sign. you miss its flight, miss
the next one. there, i point. but you are reading
on your cell phone. obituaries. another raptor.

then a kind of rapture in the wish i make
aloud: a hawk to land on a fencepost. we begin
to count. one: you read stanley almodovar.

hawk two salutes: amanda alvear.
hawk three: oscar aracena-montero.
the hawks sentinel the road like honor

guards. 49 in six miles. they are something
we sing out names to. rudolfo. antonio.
darryl. angel. juan. luis. 49 hawks

and a morning full as a dance floor.
the 50th, a falcon, we call matthew
and quit our haunting inventory.

i metal the vw toward i-44
to flee the prairie purgatory. two birds on air,
there. you see and name us: not missing.

