

or bird or beast?  
My mind's own eye sees a scavenger,  
a bird that finds  
where there's about to be  
blood.

The secretary bird,

the one that gets fat  
picking  
bits of other birds left  
in a crocodile's  
teeth. If you've seen him smile  
you know why  
the crocodile is keen  
on dental hygiene and so won't bite  
that one. But

croc or not, I'll bet  
it bothers even his leather gut  
when he remembers what  
that bird does to earn its  
bread and butter.

#### The Painters

Two of them, hired  
to make a rich man's house  
whiter. They're wearing  
white baggy suits specked with colors  
of other people's houses.

To get the gable done  
the one balances on a board across  
the ladder tops and  
the other (since the first  
isn't able  
to reach it at all) must ride  
the rich man's roof like a jockey  
and reach  
down to paint the peak.

The jockey watches the rich  
man's wife  
go in the door below the  
gable between his legs.  
He's a dreamer

She's talking to her dog.

The gable goes straight  
out from  
the top one's crotch and his partner  
is serious about  
slapping paint on its  
underside:

drops  
of white spot  
his  
cheeks and nose, a bit  
more of this  
his face will be white as a  
clown's.

-- James Hazard

Oshkosh, Wisconsin

"If the average market-ready duck weighs 1436 grams,  
and if the average rate of weight gain is 91 grams per  
week, how many days would it take to have a 500 gram  
goose fat enough to market?"

one four three six,  
take away five zero zero --  
six and off zero is six,  
three and off zero is three,  
fourteen and off five is nine  
(oh heart of mine) and we now have  
nine-hundred and thirty-six.

Ninety per week --  
seven into ninety,  
seven into nine is one  
and two down there --  
carry zero makes twenty.  
No, no (I know) ninety-one per per week --  
seven into ninety-one  
seven into nine is one  
and two down there --  
carry one makes twenty-one,  
seven into twenty-one is three  
even (Stephen) -- a thirteen  
gram per day  
weight-gain.

Thirteen into nine three six --  
thirteen into ninety-three is seven  
and two down there --