

Consistency

When my dad disappears behind the barn
for a bag of sand, I let myself stop
and plant my shovel in the concrete slop
to look past the rows of mowed-down corn
at the tree that was chosen by lightning,
its crown half-there, still green and glimmering
in the same stiff wind that's filling my ears.

The closest I'll come to enlightenment,
I bet, is a few seconds of nothing,
a loosening in the muscles of my face.
And when he limps back, one arm out in space,
the other pulled taut by the full bucket,
I feel my fingers on the wooden shaft
and part the concrete into equal halves.