Across The Sandhills

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poems: Roy Scheele

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1990

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Some-times for days the only travelers for miles and miles are things

that do not keep to the ground

cloud shadows

a hawk
A Tempo 1

Sandhill Cranes

Why did I feel like

weeping

on seeing the cranes go by?
O snowy bodies and dark-tipped wings scudding cloud-like a-
cross the sky over the mud-shouldered road
strag(ga)ling north as the crow flies

recitative

you filled me with such deep longing

figure continues
Slow \( \frac{3}{8} \)  
\( \text{rit.} \)  
\( \text{accel.} \)  
A Tempo 1

Under your hurtling cries

August

Sultry \( \frac{3}{8} \)  
\( \text{rit.} \)  

In waves beside the road

Field is all striation

a wet
shimmer drawn on the air

nothing but grass and the

goldenrod going to waste with a abandon

a paste of yel-lows wading up hill
Fishheads

Volatile \( \frac{1}{4} \) \( \frac{3}{2} \) \( \frac{3}{2} \) accel. A Tempo

Grotesque \( \frac{3}{2} \) \( \frac{3}{2} \) \( \frac{3}{2} \) sung A Tempo

As high on the wall of the chicken shed as he could reach

my grandfather kept the heads of the catfish that he caught
each one impaled on a bright ten-penny nail

They would face out into the waves of heat

all summer long each fresh head
wearing a wreath of wran(g)ling

flies for several days until the

skin began to shrink and crack like leather badly cured and

head by head a row of skulls appeared
on the low slung bench along the wall and leaned forward when Grandpa sat

long
rubbing his hands together and then let fly with a dark-as-

plug he chewed we knew he was about to tell a story

one that was bound to seem grotesque for there
in the glare of white above his head a school of weathered skulls —

dorned the shed

A Bright Winter Morning

Simply \( \frac{3}{4} \)

In the drifted gully beside the road

on-ly the top strand of the barbed wire clears the snow and on-ly
barely by an inch or so—a shadow frail as a

pen-cil line trails on the snow the wire traverses

snagging the light glint by glint as it goes
**Seed Drop**

156  Waltz \( \frac{3}{8} \) = 112

rit. mp  A Tempo

One dande-lion stands alone

162  

forming a geode-sic dome and seek-ing out a

166  

gust of wind it looks so fra-gile in the

172  

light the rays pour through it like a sieve how can so
A Tempo

frail thing survive

Melodramatic

Simp-ly by hold-ing on for life while

stood-ing tip toe on one foot its in-crad-ic-a-ble root

A Tempo
combining ballet and its poise with ballast and a load that pays top

heavy it must dig in deep

Pesante
rit.............

A Tempo 1

p

Soon

rit.............

A Tempo

p

all the ragged petals fade into this ghostly whirl of glints like

rit.............
The seeds in harness fit to burst as in the

shift ing car-go hold

straps with doubled fist

it only takes a breeze to start the
first small chutist out the door

hit the silk and down the air

several feet before the others follow suit
Slower \( \frac{3}{8} \) \( \frac{8}{3} \) and they take the yard by storm

The Gap In The Cedar

Melancholy \( \frac{3}{8} \) \( \frac{8}{3} \) A Tempo A Tempo A Tempo

Tempo 1

238

241

244

249
quasi recitative

I saw this much from the window the

branch spring light-en ed into place with a lithe shud-der of

snow

what-ev-er bird had been there chick-a-dee
or sparrow had so vanished into air

re-silient beyond recall
it had to be taken on faith to be taken at

all

269
In this moment, it took the tree to recover that trembling.

Some thing went wide in me.

There was a rush of wings.
288  
the air beaten dim with snow

299  
and then I saw through the swirling