

For Chance, Keep Beauty Warm

NANCY LEE CRAVEN

Keep truth ardent, fresh and limber
protect it by finding it in lowly places
and leave it there—

the wild bird's nest with
three small oval eggs
—fawn and flecked with brown—
toppled from tree by casual wind
into a copse by a farmer's field
whose edges are covered with thick
sloughs of new mown hay

or fallen, and haphazardly capped by a ragged thatch
of last autumn's leaves, mulched by snow
that some hunter
moving through the woods
by happenstance
pushed there.

Leave it there—
beneath shabby detritus
lost to the eye of the hawk
off the beaten path of the industrious vole—

Still, it will contend with accident and predator
but leave it there for the chance of agitation—
the thrust of claw, the hairline crack—
to pierce the tender oval,
as dun speckled shell shatters into next year's fertile soil,
albumen slicked down dries in the wind
that ruffles the fluff and fix of summer's feathers—

Now, as beauty breaks through warm
like a stroke of luck
or a Song to keep us fully amoured
In the Wild, the Warm.