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The Heron

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The Heron

Catherine Parker Sweatt

I happed upon a heron,
who showed for lack
of winged company.
We were both loners
on the quiet side of lake:
I, trudging without seeing,
a house arrestee on escape,

and he, craning as if spying
brandied each feather like a key,
narrow neck above fallen tree.
We were both wardens
in the lungs of winter gust:
I, musing while I ambled
had myself yet to flee.

But then he started, claw on log
and leaped ashore towards me.
I stopped and all was laughter
in the empty wood.
"The locksmith's dead,"
the Heron said.

"Sister,
can't you see?"