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## Squawk

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## SQUAWK

A giant flock of  
grey bellied clouds  
float northeasterly  
past a group of seasonal geese  
V formation,  
petroleum oil in their feathers  
much like their fathers  
who died last winter  
off some coast.

A black crow  
picks through a possum pile  
near the roadside  
pitiless in his gorge,  
squealing at a hopeful red-winged blackbird  
who tries his luck at the feast.

In back yards  
chickadees gather round the bird baths  
beneath the feeders,  
rimmed with seed and suet.  
The blue jay's narrow eyes  
recommend they stay away, so  
to the ground they hop  
and eat what is dropped.

A pigeon squats  
on the ninth floor ledge  
half dazed, half dead;  
no one's tossing seed away.  
He's about to drop  
The crow waits  
The people in the house  
have locked the gates  
with chains and links  
the suet shrinks  
Chickadee  
Chickadee  
the geese have all gone away  
and the clouds  
whispered snow today.

*Elizabeth Prinsze*