

woodcock

I say it flew over London making for another
green place a place to hide its bill
wood park forest chase

I had never seen one I had never seen a woodcock
but I knew it when I saw it dead
the stripes running crossways on its head
I knew it from the books and the butcher's
the books: flat colour plate the butcher's: warm breast squeezed

the species of death a riddle
no blood on the plate glass it lay still on concrete
wing feathers lifted by the wind (like he said about his verbs
and sheet rubber)

but
how, how, how, and when, when, when

she guessed, it hit a pane above and
plummeted to modern earth long straight bill
still pointing long bill killed by the invisible glass

I am the man of leaves look in the black window

it got bagged up nobody wept we stared

a week later, another crashed the tower
not flushed but stopped in air

don't come near me wild is wild

and the eyes inside the saucer
and the eyes
and the eyes glass
and the eyes

haloes like pressed flowers held their own in the thin
publication likewise the words (las palabras)

I say it flew over London