

Mid-Winter Thaw (False Spring)

The highway is noman's land
cleaned of dead animals by crows.

Spring's first human sign is the bottle picker.
He walks the shoulder with pride in his profit.
He pockets, bags, boxes and wheels
our surplus left to mark the barriers between us.

He is the auditor of our sham accounts,
of where the hubcaps, wrappers and bottles rest.

You will see him again before fall's first snow,
picking up stories and dreams of summer:
clothes, containers and scraps of us overspent,
abandoned between our corners and gravediggers.

The highway is noman's land
picked clean of our false economy.

Gregory M. Cook