

When All Else Failed

I WANTED TO BE AVIAN, TO NEED TO FLY IN ORDER TO EAT.
I WANTED TO SWOOP DOWN, DIP THE LAKE AND RISE;

TALONS FULL OF FISH. SLIPPERY WITH LIFE AND SLIPPERY
WITH DEATH. I'D LOVE THE FIRST THING I GRASPED

I'D LAND AND PIN THE CATCH WITH CLAWS
AND RIP AT THE SOFT BELLY. PUSH THE INDENT

OF THE FLAILING FISH. NOW GUTTED. LINER RED
ENTRAILS, GREY STONE OF WANT, YELLOW BILE LEAKING

AND THE BEAUTIFUL CORNFLOWER LOOK OF THE GILLS.
I'D PECK THOSE DELICATELY. WASH OF LUST

ON MY BEAK AND SATIED OR PERHAPS JUST SATISFIED
I'D LIFT AGAIN TO THE SKY WITH A SCREECH,

WITH THE PUMPING OF WINGS AND HEART IN RHYTHM,
WITH AN AWARENESS OF EVEN THE MOST SUBTLE WIND.

Jennifer Goldring