

Gyrfalcon

Imagine a hare snatched from the chiselled ice
five hundred years before you were born.

Watch from a distant star how he hammers
across the snow, eyes wild:

a shriek cast by wings, updraft and claw,
the dissevering beak. See him fly,
his long slack pinned to a cliff
above the sea's roar.

His bones, blanched by the salt air,
will be carefully unpicked
from centuries of guano and moss
by scientists gauging the loss of ice.

Few birds endure.

One lies hunched on his spine, feathers
bitten by the wind.
So thin, this bird, almost hollow, just whispers
inside him of something we don't want to know.

As the ice melts, watch him blown
little by little towards the edge of the world.