

**Wilderness House Literary Review 14/2**

*Len Krisak*

**RAPT**

Snow in the suburbs, and the day  
Not dawned enough as yet  
To cloak a red-tailed hawk  
In more than grey.  
As grey as grey can get,  
He could not see me gawk,  
But huddled in his washed-out cape.  
The white was white for yards around,  
But barely showed his shape.  
He stood his ground on neutral ground.

Silent in tones composed like these,  
No whistler near to call  
Him off what pinned his claws,  
He would not freeze,  
But pivoted — a pall  
Swiveling without a pause.  
No merest darkness could restrict him.  
Jerking like an automaton  
Poised above its victim,  
The grey hawk marked a world gone wan.

Then, color night had snatched away  
Slowly filled its scene  
Till every tint came back  
To show his prey:  
Tail feathers spread their sheen  
In more than just some black  
That splayed against the snow. They told  
The hawk it was no longer jessed  
By what it thought to hold.  
The four wings lifted to the west.