

Samskill Creek, 2004

Ideally, you are not the
raven in the picture.

You'd prefer to be
robed less in dusk

and to speak less like dahlias and
more like sunflowers—

those which, just out of the frame,
give a shape to faith.

Ideally, you wouldn't be
standing perched atop the well,

and wouldn't even have the option
to peer all the way down into it—

its humid throat quivering
like the ink font

of a glum philosopher. Ideally,
the bucket's rope

wouldn't have snapped,
the tired cobblestone

wouldn't have groaned echoes of
steel leaving you contemplating

falling as opposed to floating.
But, most of all, you wouldn't

be that raven: the one with the slit wing,
with the sky dry, still, and unbuoyant.