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The Gray Blue Mountain

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every inch of their vibrating surface to stop the impending crash with the bridge. He skimmed over the railing and dropped to the water, striking it with his orange belly and sending small geysers of water up in front of him, forming a momentary rainbow in the flat rays of the sun.

Then, he was off again; down the creek to the tressle and up, repeating the whole reckless process again and again. Up! Stall! A living vibrating boomerang silhouetted against the sky. Now . . . dive! His brain madly calculating the distance to the bridge. Now . . . pull away . . . pull away . . . splash!

And still once more he went over the arc and into his singing dive. But, this last time he didn't splash just once. He bounced along the surface like the flat skipping stones I threw when I was a kid. One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . five times he bounced, raising a miniscule rainstorm around him with every contact.

At last, with a flurry of thrashing wings he pulled himself away from the water and up to one of the light wires running to the house.

He perched with his wings hanging forward, limp and shining, his beak open and his round black eyes staring full into the yawning face of the sun.

Yes, it was going to be a real scorcher.

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The Gray Blue Mountain

The gray blue mountain
On the oriental silk
Is outlined in black,
And on a cloud like limb
A blacker bird stares
Into the valley.

A fishing boat is frozen still
On a small white sea,
And the silent man there
Catches snow into his net.

DAVID PETTY