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## Neck of the World

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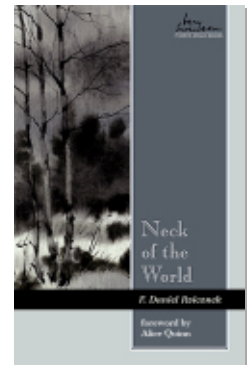
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## PRAYER FOR FALL

Thousands of miles north,  
let caribou stir on an open hill.

With five swans lifting  
over squat pines, let mute sun  
shape the grasses grown coarse  
as questions in tundra heat.

Let roads crack through lunar regions  
of the down country: hairs  
clutching in shower basins.

Let for now a hound to track  
his tail into prairies, borders,  
and damp swamp light,  
springheeled by the burnt gusts  
of foliage. The hydrangea,  
gut blue beneath my bed's window,  
casts petals like bits of map  
shredded in the dryer. Let it

barter local roots for what  
passes as a life, a name  
crumbling free of darkness.  
And of course me too. Take me in.