

Security

Yesterday's storm came out of the east,
as they do this time of year
then passed to the south, missing us.
The wind this morning is from the north.

In the lee of it, working
on my Social Security,
I try to measure the years I may
have left against the monthly checks
if I apply now, compared to those
if I wait until I reach
“full retirement age” as they call it
(assuming there's anything left by then.)

Bach was on the radio earlier
before the news of the body counts
from the hot spots breaking out
all over like a skin disease
topical treatments can't touch
and governments never have approved
a systemic remedy or
non-invasive vaccine for.

Keeping in mind that the New Deal
of which small giant step
this is part, was possible only
when the hawks and marketeers
were weaker than ever before or since,
and has been under increasing attack
since Pearl Harbor, I try
to factor in the checks my youngest
will get until he's 18

or I die (in which case,
they're supposed to get bigger).

According to the officer
who picked her up in the line of duty
protecting our border, it wasn't rape
but consensual in his
paddy wagon in the desert
on their way to the nearest jail.

And factor in the rising costs
economic warfare
has added onto everything.

The books here next to me
picked up at second hand shops
are full of women unhappy with men,
people of color unhappy with whites,
etcetera. Outside my window,
two adult hummingbirds
fight over a red flower.
Some of the plants growing there
survive by poisoning the ground
so others have to keep their distance,
some by smothering those nearby.

I'm inclined to take the money
and run. But then I think how much
a few dollars more a month might mean
when the roof starts to leak, the plumbing
needs fixing, or the whole shebang
starts to rot from the inside out,
infected by whatever bug
is already eating away
at the interior.