THE PROSE POEM:
AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

Volume 5 | 1996

Endangered Species

Mark Vinz

© Providence College

The author(s) permits users to copy, distribute, display, and perform this work under the following conditions: (1) the original author(s) must be given proper attribution; (2) this work may not be used for commercial purposes; (3) the users may not alter, transform, or build upon this work; (4) users must make the license terms of this work clearly known for any reuse or distribution of this work. Upon request, as holder of this work's copyright, the author(s) may waive any or all of these conditions.

The Prose Poem: An International Journal is produced by
The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress)
for the Providence College Digital Commons.
http://digitalcommons.providence.edu/prosepoems/

Mark Vinz

ENDANGERED SPECIES

One day last summer when I looked up, two eagles perched on the dead tree limb a few short yards from the screened-in porch. Earlier, I'd heard their cries-hunting something just beyond dense maple leaves, quarreling with the osprey that nests a half-mile down the lake. And then, suddenly, they dropped into the foliage, emerged near shore and lifted toward open water.

This year I've waited days to see them again, looked up too often from my chair, gone out in the boat to search the other shores where I've seen them soaring, where once they even seemed to follow me.

Oh, I've seen them other places, too-above river banks and cliffs, in zoos, even circling a freeway, stopping traffic-but never so close, and never to return in dreams. Especially the way they look at me and shriek.

Now, above the treeline, there's nothing but clouds and shifting light, an occasional crow or gull, a brace of mallards hurrying so business-like with the wind, a hummingbird that hovers just beyond the screen, perhaps attracted by flowers on the table. Everything has something to do today, some place to go-it's myself I have to wonder about, waiting for eagles that will not come, a glimpse of something above the far shore, veering in the wind and dropping toward a bare branch. Maybe it's just a blowing leaf-I can't stop watching.