

## January Adagio

Tonight at 10:30 I went out  
for my walk. In the distance  
I heard a major commotion  
of geese. At first I thought  
a flock might fly overhead,  
though the hour was far too late  
for geese to be aloft.

But the sound wasn't moving.

I heard a train's rumble,  
then its mournful horn.  
A freight was crossing  
the railroad bridge  
over the Fox River  
close to where the geese  
were overnighting.

As I turned around toward home  
I still could hear them fret and scold  
in chaotic counterpoint with  
the diesel's basso continuo.

And the stars tonight burned  
bright holes in the sky, decorating  
bare tree branches overhead  
like lingering holiday lighting.

After the train had rumbled off  
to where nocturnal trains all go,  
the neighborhood assumed a hush  
perturbed only by my footsteps.

Hardly anything is quieter  
than distant sleeping geese  
and star-bespeckled trees.