

The Beak of the Woodcock Bird

I woke up warm under the blankets
from a dream where I'd landed in my private jet
in a park in Las Vegas, Nevada, wondering
why I didn't choose to land

in Aspen or Park City in stead. I
laid there still, heavy pounds
of down around me cocooned.
I didn't want to, yet, open my eyes.

The only sound around was the blizzard
continuing from last evening, or
an occasional creak in it's bones
as the wind laid influence on the house.

Slippers on, I shivered down the stairs,
the sunlight on the snow was opaque.
The radio was on talking on
steadily about Richard Brautigan,

a very important writer who wrote,
among other important things,
Trout Fishing in America, and, more
importantly had a cabin near, I believe it was,

Helena, Montana. Big Sky, they say.
He had a longer mustache than
I would ever wear myself,
and he walked around with the

gunslinging composition of Buffalo Bill,
but on the streets and in the living rooms
of San Francisco, California. Billy Collins
was on the radio, too, talking about Brautigan.

Collins wrote the introduction to a reissue
of the book, which mentions no characters
other than *Trout Fishing in America*, no plot,
no storyline. Just, among other things,

a meandering theme and moving
and sometimes bizarre comparisons
like sticking a fire hydrant in a pencil sharpener
as the beak of the woodcock bird, somewhere in America.