Near Dawn

I ran along a narrow country lane
At the first light, towards the sunrise. Gloom
Was drifting restlessly, as if it grudged
To go away. A dunnock or a titlark
Flew suddenly ahead—or rather darted,
Covering some five yards in one long bound.
And then it waited, and as I approached
Again flew forward; and there was another
Already waiting next to it—they seemed
To play a kind of game . . .

Meanwhile the gaps between
The clouds were reddening. Everything looked strange.
Wind blew. Corn swayed. Mist lifted. The birds were gone—
And awesomely the molten sun arose.

EUGENE DUBNOV