

the hypothesis

suppose that a chaffinch
one late May morning
after two months
of dogged chanting
realised it had sung
all it had to sing

and simply stopped

and there was the sky
still wonderful in blue

leaves everywhere
shaping breezes in their image
wild flowers
bending to the bees

and everything that needed
hope or beauty
striving for it
as if there were
no other aim or end

imagine the gasp
the gasp of things
at such a recognition

throats caught mid-note
nests unfinished
eggs still-dreamed

imagine
the emptiness that dawns
and spreads like a horizon

what then will it take
to bring a throat
to song once more

and where will ears
ever again
be attuned to hear it

chaffinch, if you are listening
resist my hypothesis

keep singing

(36 lines)