

JOHN THOMPSON  
**COLD WIND**

John Thompson (1938-1976) was born in Timperley, England. After earning a bachelor's degree from the University of Sheffield and a doctorate from Michigan State University, he became a professor at Mount Allison University. The following poem was published in the winter 1966-1967 issue and included in the collection *At the Edge of the Chopping There Are No Secrets* (1973).

In this country  
the wind kills  
with swift birds  
like bronze javelins.

They say don't  
mistake its images,  
learn the beat of its cold wing,  
the strain of its sinews  
gathering on the haft.

And then they tell  
of those who got the music  
into their marrow:  
the old men who outdid its terror,  
beating their tongues like oak leaves  
against its fierce metal.

men with the straight eye  
insomniac,

the stubborn song  
fast in the bone.