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Rice Birds Barrio Road

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This is grace that's achieved at some cost, yet
 takes itself lightly,
As in the work of an Oriental artist, where lines
 remain lines
Yet blend to form camellias and winter plums
Whose beauty urges us, however,
Not to think little of his pains: lost easel,
Difficult wife, all endured to get there,
Even with fun, who knows, for ambition induces
A curious joy despite the trouble. . .

It does,
It seems, in these rice birds wild in flight. . .
Field, sky and mountain must seem to these
Small, drunken fliers a laugh of colors.
They're artists only when at rest.

Despite their weight, they
Just slightly bend, not snap, the stalks of grass,
Thin and definite as Chinese brush strokes.

Here the river has the right of way.
The jeep crosses the water and glides
into noon.
Somnolent, we see shadows of coco trees
But forget where they are.
Then a jolt, as the jeep, its engine purring,
Stops to let two startled pigeons flush across
And miss the fender, as does a goat that claims,
Surprisingly,
The right of rivers.