

JOHN WITTE

THE SOUND BARRIER

The sky boomed
what was it not thunder not
blasting at the quarry the little birds flew up the dog

woofed once
then listened the boy crossing
the field cringed lifting his shoulders the sky spoke

not again not
his father's rage slamming the door
rattling the cupboard the wall cracked the swept-wing

fighters banked
over the airfield plaster falling
from the ceiling not a quake not the end of their lives

not the crump
and concussion of a bomb
a sonic boom passed over the field the cow staggered

into the creek
the eggs cracked in their nest
the boy saluted the mare threw herself on the fence.