

**MICHAEL BAZZETT**  
**The Men Who Disappear**

There is no box with mirrors.  
It happens as someone watches.  
They go out to the woods to live.



Most change their names. One

liked birds. Also archery, often running  
his finger along the feathered fin

that held the arrow true in flight,  
the feature known

as *fletching*. So Fletcher Starling it was.  
Whether changing names changes

other things is uncertain. These circumstances do not  
submit easily to terms of cause and effect.  
There is no bureau one can apply to

with such questions, a lack of authority  
that would be appalling were it not

the norm.



The man finds shelter and quits shaving.  
His wisping hair and beard become  
a nest for his nose and cheekbones.

His features sleep silently, side by side,  
like something discovered in a quiet glen.



One problem  
with these men  
who disappear

is that once  
they do it  
they're still here.

When they walk  
mountain streams  
broken reflections

stalk them:  
a fact that should  
be obvious yet

often eludes them  
until the moment  
they see two

eyes floating in the water.



Many of them become proficient  
at tasks we relegate to earlier times:

knot tying, whittling, reading  
the weather as a well-thumbed manual.

Handling boredom like a claw hammer  
that both drives and pulls the shrieking nail.

Understanding that the sounds *own someone*  
are locked inside of *lonesome one*.



The observer of the disappearance  
is often an interested party.

Female witnesses are not uncommon.  
These women swear that someone was

*there* not two weeks ago  
and now, *this*. They indicate impressions

left in couches and easy chairs, claiming  
*That's not the man I married.*

These words are undoubtedly  
true yet sometimes understanding

takes years to arrive.