

2023

## Crowbar

Robert Wrigley

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/bpr>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#), and the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Wrigley, Robert (2023) "Crowbar," *Birmingham Poetry Review*: Vol. 50, Article 89.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/bpr/vol50/iss2023/89>

This content has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the UAB Digital Commons, and is provided as a free open access item. All inquiries regarding this item or the UAB Digital Commons should be directed to the [UAB Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication](#).

*Robert Wrigley*

## Crowbar

The right subject for long study,  
this thirty-inch, fourteen-pounder:  
curved end called the swan's neck,  
angular other end a chisel,  
intermediate long shank  
between them hexagonal and holy.  
Black like the brilliant raven.  
Beautiful magnifier of muscle,  
the magnitude of its leverage  
and loosening, prise bar basher,  
hooker of and hanger-on of all  
that hooked and hung upon might be.  
Shakespeare called it an iron crow.  
But it's the dog hit by a car  
that comes back to me every time  
my hand or eye lights on one.  
The seven of us watched  
from the flatbed deck while Lucy Doolin  
took the bar from the tool rack  
and put the screaming dog down  
with a single blow then lifted gently  
its body into the bed with us.  
This was our summer job,  
a trip a day to the dump with litter.  
Lucy snuffed a cigarette in a ribbon  
of blood, lit another, and hung the crowbar  
back on the rack. He might have looked  
at us then, but either we were all  
or only I was looking at the dog.  
Then Lucy spoke to the air wherever

we were: choice, he said, the will  
of God or whatever, but also the tool  
at hand, the right tool for the job.