Moving Heavy Things

I. BRAKING
From the yellow house to the little house, 
warm windows to porch light powered by extension cord.
I take the dog with me, her blue eye flashing out at raccoons 
pushing their little hands into the compost pile, her brown eye 
tracking me, my course through the garden, past 
green bell peppers, black in this dark light, 
hanging their weight from such small stems.

II. TIGHTENING
Here is the hot twist of cotton into fist.
You keep imitating a crocus. Every morning 
your hands turn white in the root 
birth. I have this pile of shingles 
and a barn side that needs repair. The overlapping 
makes us tighten our grip most of all. The watertight 
cedar helps us become lovers 
of heft – the anvil your brother found 
buried in the pig sty, the millstone you made into a table 
in the back yard. Heavy things, they keep us. 
It’s the tightening of our fingers, and I’m thankful for the labor.

III. WRINGING DOWN
I am the level platform built in the north meadow. 
I am the plumb corner of a barn eve. 
I am the dark painted elm limb, 
blackened with tar, used as a club.

IV. SWIGGING
I’ve learned to lean out hard. The motion 
bends the body to it, is the silent show 
of how a ball and socket works, the slow 
roll of one surface against and inside another.