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## On the Porch Swing at Dawn

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# On the Porch Swing at Dawn

by Walt McDonald

A Steller's Jay plopped down on the deck,  
cocking his haughty head, flag-blue,  
dark topknot like a plume. We never fed him,  
but he swooped down each dawn

to find some sudden wonder, a worm  
or cockroach to pop. We slipped outside  
with coffee in the gray-dawn cold,  
grandchildren sleeping a thousand miles away

from hawks and big-horn sheep, the clumsy bears  
hungry for berries, for carcasses wolves caught.  
Light slashed Montana clouds like a scythe,  
spruce needles silver-blue. Peaks flared

like glaciers from the fog, chalk cliffs  
burning to granite while we rocked.  
Crows cawed past the cabin,  
flapping across a mile of meadow and gone.

