

Martin Robertson

What goes up must come down

We can't tell what mistake
it was that wiped out the dinosaurs and their like
after lording it so long
(far longer than man has done).
Whatever it was it was irreparable.
Also inevitable?
Well, that again's a thing we can hardly tell.
But now that we watch ourselves
contriving against our wills
a no less ineluctably certain end
for triumphant humankind,
it does look probable
that the drive to dominance
is linked by more than chance
with a lemming counterwish,
that in that case as in this
(man and dinosaur)
it is some built-in device,
some failsafe mechanism,
that hurries us down to drown offshore.