

Somehow warmer than my skin
you taxi nearer to the stove
as if this cold won't last through September

—you don't know a winter
or why your wings, glugged with loops and dives
are icing over —hangar talk! more bank
throttle, more rudder —you still rub your legs
on the air and that difficult chandelle
that swat you almost enjoyed, the low buzz
over the table lamp, flaps down
like planing over water. You need water.

This kitchen floor won't thaw in time, nose up
more— there's just so much air
and the floor is ravenous, the refrigerator
is no help either, starts
whether or not I open its door to climb in
though inside stays cockpit dim, cluttered
and this white tablecloth, controlled
by a cup, a spoon, a temperature
a heading on the cloudcover underneath.

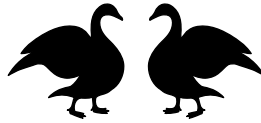
Fly, my eyes too are freezing and what they see

is made colder :your wings from above
frayed :blankets lifted for the bloodmeal
and under the crosshairs burning on the stove
where you walk to suck more stench

—I'm walking you nearer, the sun
half covered with its horizon
as your dry wings once spread
lifted a city to your eyes that see
only its intensity :a sun, a stove
a skin held up more or less closer
vaguely the same shade under the North Sea

—you need more water, more tea
this time without drowning
or the belief water loves you —all summer
this faucet kept open for something
that needs boiling :waves dragging
till the spoon points down —nose up!

Fly, I'm walking you through an Earth
unable to lift itself nearer to the sun
—you need oceans :the hovering
that beat your heart open last June
—you need water for steam :the thunderhead
to grasp you upward into my arms
now closer than the sky that drips like gauze
from your eyes, autumn and shadow.



These stones flattened
as feathers almost too heavy
lift the Earth to the dawn
it feeds on :another sun
eaten alive, by evening

a hill, stretching and the light
halfway down its throat —these gravestones
the sweptback wings
no light flies past, the moon
bundled in this dark
almost escaped —these birds

half stone, half wind
monstrous! the fire they steal
is never enough and looks at stars
more feathers, these birds

ache as if I were once one
and every morning the ground
lifts my eyes and I wake
not sure why it tastes like stone

or this churchyard

still cringing under my headlights
my skidmarks that claw
then blanket the cry for food
that couldn't wait for morning.

It was bleeding from both ears :each morning
lifts too much, takes on weight
and I crawl as snow carries its light
to where the Earth is already cold
and stays at our graves

—I must have been once a stone :a patch
still trying to muffle the Earth's first bone
its gagging moan everywhere —how else
will each morning stir into worth
into mercy and memory and bring

more fire :the Earth's first meal
as every stone still calls out
for breath, for mouths and kisses
—every stone gone deaf, never empty again.