

## **The Offering**

The crows settle in the field outside  
noisily fighting over the things I left them.  
One flies right past my window, a cheap necklace  
studded with tiny glass beads  
clutched in its beak, another bird tight behind, contesting its claim.

They squawk and caw in frenzied delight  
over old glass rings bought at yard sales  
earrings and pendants made on my back porch  
a handful of little dolls pinched out of tin foil.  
They stalk my treasures until the sun goes down  
leaping and hopping and shrieking in the grass  
finally leaving the field too empty and quiet.

## Remember

When you unearth a corpse and it's still fresh, and you see it writhing  
with maggots and larvae and nymphs moments from exploding into flies

remember: this is their home, and you're as much a disturbance to them  
as they are to you. Imagine the revulsion of a salesman stepping into your home  
unexpectedly, on a day you decided, *fuck it, I'm not picking up dishes  
or doing laundry, or vacuuming or cleaning up after anyone but myself today.*  
That salesman would probably wear the same expression on their face

as you are wearing now, spade in hand, peering into the dark of fresh earth  
pots of peonies and roses waiting to be dropped in, completely forgotten  
the unexpected flash of white knobbed fingers, a deflated eyelid,  
all those unanswered phone calls explained.

## Migration

If you ever wondered why there are giant butterflies stretched across those busted-up, flaky-paint houses in Kansas, it's because those housewives know God is a butterfly, and they want Him to know they know this secret that Jesus curled up inside a cocoon to transform into the Holy Spirit erupted from His prison and flew off glittering to Heaven.

On the last day, all of these cemeteries will erupt with butterflies because this is the promise God made with that rainbow, that those who follow Him will also become butterflies, that a coffin is shaped the way it is because it's just another cocoon, yawning wide to take your body to pupate, molt eventually dissolve your corporeal form so you, too can take to the sky.

## Just In Case It Is

You stand on the stage and look out at the crowd and you know  
that there are people watching you right now that will be talking about this night  
ten twenty years from now, it might mean something, who knows  
who or where you'll be then. Perhaps there is more honor in obscurity  
more validity in an artist virtually ignored until unearthed so much later  
either as a shoebox of recordings in the back of a closet  
or under the tip of a pickaxe upturning your work's final resting place

but wouldn't it be nice if the people recording this on their phones  
showed this night to their children or grandchildren twenty thirty years from now  
have this night met with some kind of silent reverence  
because even then, they know who you are?

So take a breath before you speak, make sure your throat is clear  
there's no phlegm or cough waiting to distort your words  
This could be really important.

## **Below Zero**

It's too easy to imagine  
letting myself get trapped here, to imagine  
resigning myself to a door blocked off by snow  
frost stretching like predatory fingers across the windowpanes  
the roads covered in slick ice. It's too easy

to find excuses to not leave, to find ways  
to make the food in the cupboard last longer than usual  
to settle for what is already here, to forget  
anything past the end of the driveway.  
At night, I imagine this house is floating in space  
surrounded by stars only dreams can reach  
I surrender.