

Grief Bird

A hard
shard in the upper cavern
of my throat would catch if I swallowed
But I'm frozen
and wait back stuck like a corpse
with no idea what to do,
so the brittle bit shifts on its own, prods, pushes,
then
plunges up through my throat;
as I jerk and gag it emerges—
beak hook, nostril, eyelid like waxed paper,
damp head, large clog of a feathered body,
miserable sodden wings.
And perches
on my lip
as if on cleft rock, talons
fastened to my teeth.
Wet wings unfold.
The beak parts. The throat thumps
for centuries till everything dries.

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So I unhouse my bird.

It flaps
at the sun like a broad crow
until the spread
of brownblack feathers
comforts
like cloud cover.