

Rising

To the bird on my heart, you
Can't blaze or burn,
Hunger and yearn,
Simmer deeply into where you'll find -
The beautiful solitude.

I played echo with a mocking jay.
She isn't a jay, but we pretend.
Call and answer,
Answer and answer until...
I stop calling. Does she
Feel that loneliness
Without me?
I never hear her feather scatter -
Or settle.
Maybe she's still answering.

To the bird on my heart.
Your flames and fire look...
Far too stagnant, frozen,
Unfeeling unmoving unscathed -
What will lick if not the flame? Yet
The beating and pulsing give you
Motion. Or maybe that's my own
Answer.

One day, I'll cover you with dust.
I'll burrow deep in another heart
Of crumbs and thorns and earth,
Mahogany and oak,
Lives taken to hold another
Life taken.
Perhaps you'll rise then,
And set the grass ablaze.

Lights

(based on the Native American mythological Thunderbird)

Sounds before sight
Trembles and tremors
The beating of wings gathering
Clouds, no longer
Puffs and wisps of gentle
Mists. Just a shadow, a
Myth and legend.

Transported tongues of
Serpents he grasps,
They morph into bolting
Flashes, striking and slashing through
Amethyst skies, weeping
The drops we've longed
To taste. And oh,
How we waste.

She croons a story of
Lost and longing kings.
Plumaged and clawed
Loneliness, can he feel
The sheets of seeping water
And light, blinding and conquering
Through fragile feathered eyes.

I've never seen this bird of prey
Or is it pray, don't we wish for
What follows? The torrent and
Terror, seeping and soaring leaving
Only, only, a story.

Crows

I count them each day
(one, two, three)
Of course there's more of them.
I see the dead plumage and
I know they're still alive – somewhere
And they'll always come back.
Crows everywhere are equally black.

The squawking wakes me, takes me
Shakes my own white feathers until
I am nothing but freckled pink
Limbs. Phantom grey, not
Ebony, like the sharp cry of that
Harsh black bird.

(I don't want to die)

Paranoid cats with coal eyes
If they grew wings, they'd
Nest beside the crows on
Electric lines. I heard they
Peck out eyes. Then all
I'd see is their dark wings -
All the time.

I thought I could be a dove...
In love with olive branches
And orange lenses. But
The crows, the crows, they
Never rest and take
The very best, and soot
My wings of ivory.
What irony...to be haunted -
By what scatters when
I step too close.

(I don't want to die)

They flock together
And I count more and
More, each day they cycle
Through, they must take turns
Watching me, stalking me,
I know even in dreams that
They stay because I can feel
The stab – as I begin to feather.