

Facts About Crows

I find it a blessing to know
a gathering of glossy chrome
birds owns a word like *murder*, that a word
like murder can mean something other
than death and destruction and your waxy
face staring back at me in the morgue.

When I left, after identifying
your body, a murder of crows erupted
from the trees, their loud cawing pulling
me to the present, pulling my eyes
upward as they darkened the sky
with their sleek wings. They shrieked
and called to one another and maybe
to me.

When a crow dies its neighbors
may throw a funeral – the discovery
of a dead crow can attract a murder
of crows, hundreds of birds floating
like black lint in the sky, never touching
the dead but swarming, filling the air
with their cries.

Crows can recognize and remember
faces and I wonder, if in my grief,
they recognize me or if the distortion
of my wailing mouth, the wetness
of my tear-filled eyes makes me
indistinguishable from any
other mourner.

A crow in the South Pacific makes
a hook by bending pliable twigs
and then uses it to dig out insects
from the crevices of trees. I wonder
if this hook could reach into the crevice
of my heart, if it could pull out the pain
that hides there.