SORROW'S ARGUMENT

On the day before we learn to distrust it, grief is welcome. It soaks us with heavy wet gratitude in being able to feel anything at all. We take grief down into our throats and hold it thick just above our bellies. The not quite fullness reminds us of the way back up and through, past our lips, is breath and, eventually, song. There are four words for this: waiting, resistance, sigh, alchemy.

The day it arrives fully announced and inconsiderate of our day-dreams, we pretend its calls are to others and leave the door soundly shut. Grief, when eaten too quickly, burns the stomach bright with holes meant for falling through, inside out, and no well equals the pitch and pull we glimpse only after we tumble over the edge. There are four words for this: bags, root, turning, final.

In the days after, grief is christened soft sorrow, seeming as white snow piling all afternoon while children sleep. Sorrow is a mysterious thief taking wasps carrying our grief into an unknown, distant summer. We should be thankful and blink, laugh. They are neighbors, grief and sorrow, as their trickery is our acceptance of blindness, our desire for something sweet. There are four words for this: attachment, underbelly, heft, charity.
WHAT OF BIRDS?

We credit the feather’s shape for their momentum, but our own battered skin flutters unseen, toward errors of unknowing. We are spoons turned against capturing wetness, slick curves refusing to bow inward. To communicate softness in avigation, we must forget impulses tentative, and just, as they do, these birds, dive behind currents. This is saying hide; this is saying it’s too much to care. When I ask you if there has been a difference in one thousand years of eyes trained upward, forced through certain jealously, into awe, I expect an answer laced through with an erudition enough to make me properly jealous. It is too easy to accept the son overtaking the father, a breeze breathing the young higher, the aged remaining an immobile windmill by the barn. This is my response to your response, leaving us no closer to reprieve. We might never know how to explain what hurts us as we travel through one alliance after another, no closer to our own waxless flight.