

## Necropsy

A fallen chick, bonesoft and free  
of its incubational shell.

I imagine my body as this bird,  
opened like a fig, unsexed and  
ripening on the ground.

Its claws are frozen in grip,  
each finger bent at the knuckle,  
puckered toward roughskinned ankles.  
I am comforted by its spiny  
wings, downy underbelly split open;

this body turns outward without  
showing its underpinnings. The bones  
have reinvented themselves, no longer  
scaffolding, they fuse to organs,  
living in tents concealed by swollen tissue.

I lean close to the body, use a stick  
to search for sets: ovaries, tubes,  
but find none. I take the bird in  
my hand, press against its little bush  
of meat, its foul belly pushed open.

It is familiar. I catalogue its body,  
take notes on its napping guts,  
the tenderness found in expiry,  
the body no longer weighted with work  
or conditioned by movements.

Its form never flew, couldn't collect  
its wind-earned luster. It's just a body  
escaping its skin, hunting for  
purpose. This is why. I look  
towards its figure to guide my own.

A dead bird knows how to avoid  
self-pity: let injury be swaddled,  
let death be a marker of possibility. Become  
something more than a body,  
a wing, a slender beak.