**The Bird Ceremony**

Annie Blake

men are closed mouths when they die here when they wake

in water they can be portals i was a dark house

he told me to watch all my orifices i snibbed the front door

the dead man will find the hinge and hammer the rod delicately

until it tightens his lips hammering is hammering

the man who knows he is shut down with hinges will wait until

i find the door i missed on the outside the dead woman will yell for my money

she wants it to feed flying monkeys who will never learn

to dig their heels in dust to wait like tribal people do deaths

need to rehearse to different rhythms webs swing differently from one season

to the next some from spiders from things we will wake up to one day

drowning in water falling through the sky can teach

us a lot about the theory of entanglement i have learnt what to do

the coffin contained my mother and father it slipped

to the floor from the hearse wriggling and straightening out like a worm

the ceremony of the birds is accustomed to this method of nourishing itself

tears cannot be tasted between slammed teeth and are more irrational

than women who never learnt to propel water they simply don’t have anything

to pour out lacunae in minds don’t heal very well needling

at room temperature their tarring and feathering overripe guilt in the warm

of my thighs there is no use pointing to empty jars there are no jars to point at

i will unhook each fig leaf for anyone who lets me eat with free access to water

in taps snakes these skies made from something akin to pituito-serous substances i see now planes swimming through cervixes

my tongue licks the rim of outer space and the sea

i seal it and post what belongs to me

only take it if you understand i am not the envelope i am

a triangular dog-eared page the premature milk from the stalk the configuration

the unleafing of god’s tree the serum from the fig