

## Jar of Feathers

I have not forgotten your city  
      where I smiled when you stole sweets in the streets  
  where the wind cobwebbed itself around all, its birds  
parrots, hummingbirds

      I know I am not there when I count the empty stork nests  
on chimneys, on farm roofs

      It is summer here when cracked concrete opens in dandelions,  
when the earth is textured in pears and hill mustard

      You say, there is only dust and sun where you live, only summer  
I say, for many years, they believed  
  swallows hibernated underwater

An image of fish and swallows pulled in a fishnet  
                                  from a lake      I say, they believed birds migrated on the moon—

You say, there is only dust, and sun  
                                  I say, a lake full of swallows, a moon white with birds—

I have not forgotten your city, it held your skin  
                                  warm as tealeaves at the bottom of a cup

You say, there is more dust to you than flesh  
      I say, all I have is a small lake shining white with the bones of cats and cattle  
  in its bottom

I say, it is winter here, birds freeze into lakes,  
                                  women the color of lichen carry bread in bare hands

It is winter here, I have only skin feathered in memory,  
                                  white fields under the rosy underbellies of clouds

You say, you have gathered fruit, bruised and bright,  
                                  but holding, carrying it to me

      I say, bird, and sky