

Doug Ramspeck

Crow Art

What begins? Forgets?
The weeds sway today

like scythes beside the river.
A lingering moon

presses one stirrup
into a curvature of hill.

There is no oracle here,
just a few primordial clouds

drifting above the abandoned
kiln in the neighbor's yard,

slipping above the sprawl
of vases, plates, and porridge

bowls hardened by the fire.
At nineteen I lived one summer

across the street from a funeral
home. Always there were

men and women in dark
clothes in the parking lot,

grief becoming half-veiled
moments witnessed out



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a window, the attenuated
self. The sky was external

and isolated, the cars
in the lot with their mutable

shapes. But today, slowly,
the gray continent of field

is becoming, at its verge,
a faint flame, softening

into two smudges of crows
emerging from night's hall.

Here is the language of
relinquishment, my neighbor

firing up his kiln, smoke
corkscrewing into air to form

what appears, from a distance,
to be wisps of feathers, wings.

