

Broken Wing

Forget the skip with its broken sofas and rolled up rugs,
the tossed-out toaster and kettle, a wetsuit and wooden chest
and queen bed stained with mud, they are things you thought you needed.
Forget how you passed the chatty workman your sledge hammer,
your saw with deepest teeth to mash up the coffee table
crafted by your crusty father when you were a boy —
So solidly made, he said, not like today's rubbish.
Forget the wrench of chucking those chairs up into the skip,
so many years of friends and dinners and music and laughter —
perhaps they'll come again. Re-write yourself as a rainbow.
Easier to forget the flood, a crucifying rain
hammering for hours in moonless darkness that ran away
with your shoes. You stepped into water that felt like a verdict.
You cannot forget the magpie that came most days for a feed
of leftover meat or sunflower seeds, demanding as a Viking
dragging his unhinged wing to your door. *Broken Wing*
we called him, his morning song arresting, indecipherable
except as joy, a trestle of notes holding the house
now emptied, that salvaged bird has flown, or fallen silent.