Cemetery crow

She squats on a headstone shouting blue murder.

Jumps to an angel’s wing, its fallen head

face-down in moss, hosting a bed of grubs.

All one to her, the living and the dead –

columns and obelisks, garlanded crosses.

Here she can feast in peace.

Best place for humankind is underground,

dumb beneath their drab memorials:

*fallen asleep*, *reunited*,

dreaming a life beyond the clouds.

She’s been there. Her kin hung out to dry,

nailed over doors.

At ease on a war grave’s milk-white stone

she’s an honest bugler. No waiting out

the bleak midwinter. She lives it.

Has raised her broods, seen off

red kites adrift from their road-kill pickings,

landfill gulls trying their luck.

A man brings flowers. She flies ahead

so he’s the one who follows.

Her anthem, sung from a lime’s bare bough,

sounds to him like laughing.