

The Visitors

That morning we lost count. You said perhaps
a thousand geese hauling in a cold front
from the coast. Skein after skein of them

skimming roofs so low we could feel the wind shift
with beat of wing, a drum to their honked warnings.
Overhead they raked the sky to straggly chevrons

like loose ends of wool untucked, or thought
pulled through the clouds of a hard year.
The air was charged with them, alive and strange

in these spare days before New Year. We were just visitors
and couldn't say if their arrival or passing
were commonplace, or some rare slot of moon and weather.

Looking up, you said its easy to be wonderstruck
by numbers in a flock, the miles they fly,
the way gun-metal grey silvers in winter light.

We fashion our own omens. Some sign perhaps
or nothing more than songs of snow
from Latvia, the tilt of northern hemispheres.