

A Murder of Crows

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A murder of crows explodes overhead
just as my grandson lifts his backpack
into the car, the crows cawing,
the whip of their wings muffling our words
 good-bye, glad you could visit,
crows' bodies so close I see their curled talons,
rusty orange of their open beaks,
sense the sorrow they wear like capes.

It's been more than a year
since my daughter died, a grief we carry
day by day, my grandson
and his three sisters.

 Nevertheless we've learned
to accept grief's presence—how sometimes
it binds us, other times follows as we walk,
or how it might erupt
as part of our beautiful natural world—

like this simple murder of crows passing by
as I embrace my grandson, send him on his way
traveling home to Kansas, where my daughter's last year
lulled us into thinking change might never come,
 until it did, as suddenly
as a cloud of crows disappearing.