Flight

On Friday I cut paper wings
in blues and greens and purples and his
in shades of fire, cuffied with Indian silver bangles,
marrriage binding bangles, long life and prosperity
for a new beloved, although my own
are likely tin.

Bird calls
in the morning mean lost
virginity, bright and perfect, someone once
told me when everything was new
and nothing had ended.

When my wing-friend crawls
into my bed
it is because he spends his days in battles
of wit, spears, terrifed of his own
dumb luck. He smells like milk
and he is so much smaller
when he sleeps, a crumpled
black square out of the shoulders
of his suit jacket
still worn.

I saw a woman dancing
on a shining mound of broken glass,
her bare skin crunching
like little bells in time as she twirled
faster and faster until she became like a bird, too,
engulfed in smoke and coal.

That night we are fringed with feathers bent
at odd angles, flaring out like dancers’
skirts in motion. We shed them to tattered heaps
on the rug, we lock wrists and we cling
together in all that space, the street,
we swing together, haloed
and hazy under the streetlights,
we shout out the noise.
I give him a template, a construction paper feather to trace — I cut my own freehand for the sake of imperfection.