I asked the mind for a shape / and shape meant nothing

Britta Ameel
I asked the mind for a shape
and shape meant nothing

after Brenda Hillman and for Greta

Door frames make space
for the frame of a human figure.

All touch built for hands.

Even sound—Sunday's mower buzz—
has edges.

An aerial view, we see the idea of map.
No borders for the remembering

and so the bird songs become

New name for the skin of thing.

I fear the invisible lines a sort of talking
resistance to actual voice, actual person.

If we are inside-out animals
would I put yours on.

Circular attention to you, a space-making device,
an opening and close.

When the shape was invented mourning
became a tight white box.
Illusory transport and lack.

Morning. The woodthrush
harmonizes with itself and my heart
fidgets against the pillow.
What is a glass stone in a metal cup.

Human standing inside a door.
Language. Scent of skin against—
The morning I learned about you,  
between worlds if there is space  
for a body there, I needed borders  

to do the remembering.  
Isn't it always about shape?  

The crow in the parking lot from above,  
one black dot on the grid,  
might mean  
nothing, but I read into it. How else  
to distinguish and let extinguish?  

We say things get caught in our throats.
Does sound disappear, can you see through us like light?
I fear losing your shape.

Is that blatant enough
and can I have you back.

We mean glass stone against metal.

The throat box chilly and metallic
against the bird's thin skin.

We line the edges of world up
in map and expect to understand

why some birds sing only for sound,
why the liminal takes you over.

Fidgeting glass stone a doorway
and the mower makes a space.

I fear what is written between the heart.
An inside-out, animal, a naming.