

Christine Casson

Door Thrown Open Into Wings

For Sarah Hannah, 1966-2007

For four days a mockingbird trills and sings
fervent notes to anyone who'll listen,
hours on end from its secluded limb,
vocalizing wrens, a bluebird, flickers,
the chups and chirrs of parenting robins,
calls and refrains increasingly frequent
and fraught — an unearthly song — some siren
needling I can't dismiss, circumventing
sleep; my waking pinioned to sound.

You'd flown

to your death from a roof, I'd heard, keening
in silence your *not here*; your *ones*, *nothings*
rupturing air, definitions splintering.
This singing is you, throat open, alone —

ten years in each day. And you've begun again —

Independence Day

Music from a thumping radio one block over
And fireworks that sputter, sizzle, then wham
Madly in the humid air, like gunshots
They sometimes hear late at night. Planes pass overhead —
Incessant this travel here to there
Even on the Fourth. Some child in the street
Shouts in delight. This couple eat their dinner
On a scrappy deck — the only sound
The scraping of forks on their cheap plates —
Her “pretty” *Corelle* dinnerware that won’t break.

No need to buy replacement settings
Except in the most extraordinary
Circumstance — when she slams one to the floor, *bam*,
Frustrated, *bam*, by their inability
To get along. They will make and remake their small
Universe: fireworks, food, a naive squeal, and songs
Played too loud on a radio next door,
Turned up hard enough to crank a world.