

the sum of everything we mishear

*They're scaring
me—you utter*

out your last breath—or is it *The air's carrying me*

* * *

the 'Ohia chained to our Riverside bed is collapsing
under the weight of its crown—fashion yourself paper

graze the surgeon's scalpel across my forearm—scroll yourself in,
like a Mezuzah—I'll stitch you shut

Write, you say
but fail to specify *with* What

Glean ink from anything you
don't deserve then everything

(was only ever
grace)

I mistook everything
that wasn't

grass for poison ivy,
horizon for a tsunami

no matter how sutured our skin
I only ever touch your scatter

less in the bed we're not sleeping in—quite possibly the view
from my desk amounts to a staging area for every bird on O'ahu with a death wish

3 so far this year and I can't repair any
of their wings—I'm left with paper

to weigh down your side of the bed—poems
for your body to reject

I let you suffer—leave you
an indelibly warped wingspan

I don't know the extent to which all language isn't dark matter
Write, you say

but fail to specify *on* What—Try the last city
to come between us, that city rained an awful lot

on Tuesdays they'd clean the streets & the one time you don't remember
to move the Prius I curse myself—I use Bubbe's Yiddish—only after

it rains more dying light on us than you can drain I locate a can of polyurethane
in the Brownstone basement—we are wedged apart you

& I by ancient piping—except when we're sleeping
the American elms that layer Riverside Dr. send out appendages—

lattice like, they creep up copper
vents, breach drywall—twigs prod my ears—tendrils

cross the circuitry of our dreams
with everyone we don't make eye contact with on the streets

Write me out on 138th & Broadway
castigating the Heavens

Better yet invite me in to reunite What few atrophying cells
have you left on my skin

I'll serve you dust from the rafters—serve you yourself
on the China my mother wants you to have but won't pay to ship

to Honolulu—here's What I can tell you about archipelagos
scraping up against pavement—the geography of our dreams is never off

by more than one branch—Don't
write the sum of every

star collapsing into all the light it'll never see—the sand
sticks around for the same lightshow night after night

silk Aerials dragging paper
wings—if you

can't glimpse beyond its canopy,
fell the Tree of Life—unfurl one last page to clot

the light—I'll write
the air carrying you