## What Remains.

I watch it perched

Perched at the edge of the world gone silent

It doesn't know joyful noise—

not the way we do

The bird sings
Each note falls perfect
Flawless, calculated yet a disappointment
Its body: metallic and sharp
The notes aren't like they used to be
Not like the delightful chaos I used to hear
Used to hate

The bird caws
The days of real caws are gone
Real caws would be a wonderful symphony of notes,
wonderfully blending together
What remains is only a replica of what once was
A replica of what was once wild
I miss their chaos
They were messy, unpredictable yet undeserving of hate
Perfectly imperfect

The bird whistles
I wonder, "does it know what it is imitating?"
Just as it is unaware
It will never recover the absence
It will never know that the world it sings to, is dead
It will never sing the way they used to

The bird sighs

Not at me, but at what is left

The trees are gone

The rivers are gone

The people are gone

The sky is now stretched thin like a pale, gray sheet

And all that remains

Is this hollow, fake bird

That keeps functioning, gears and all, like nothing has happened

The bird screams

I want to crush it

To reach out and make it stop pretending

Stop pretending like trees will brighten from the joy of spring

and the rivers will speak again

To make the sound of the world reappear

But I don't

because it's all that is left

Left in a world where everything has slipped away

Where all sounds of laughter, joy, freedom

Have eternally disappeared

The bird cries

And I stand there crying with it

Listening to a ghost, not of the bird

But of us

Of everything we ended

Living, breathing, real, humans

The bird laughs

At everything we destroyed

everything we let slip away,

while we covered the earth in plastic and steel

Destroying everything until we were the only things left

thinking we could live without the things that made us human

The bird sings on

A reminder not of what remains but of what we have lost The bird sings And there is no one left to listen