Birds You Cannot See

The Handsome Family

There are birds in the darkness that douse electrical fires
Flaring up in nursing homes and the bedrooms of blind men
Birds you cannot see

There are birds in the darkness who nest in wooden crutches
Eye patches and bandages, broken spinal columns
And pots of winter plants

Birds you cannot see
Filling every tree
Falling out of closets
And perched on the hands of dying men

There are birds in the darkness who lead lost dogs off highways
Steer boats past icebergs, save children stuck in wells
Birds you cannot see

There are birds in the darkness seen by those with tumors
Circling common light bulbs with blue-feathered halos
And the sound of rain

Birds you cannot see
Filling every tree
Falling out of closets
And perched on the hands of dying men

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