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## Three Ways to Look at the Balkans and not a Blackbird Among Them

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Sandy Feinstein

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Forgetting is like so many birds  
that gather in huge flocks:  
dark shades, small, unfeathered  
and gone without individuation.

Some birds are not for forgetting.  
They lift off on wings heavy  
with memory, ravenous harpies  
disregarded at great risk.

1. an English Sparrow, thick beaked  
banged on the bathroom window.  
Peck, thpt, bang against glass  
of unlikely resilience.  
Peck, thpt, bang its dawn call  
Blagoevgrad, Melnik, Sandanski

2. a dovecote looked down on me  
boiling water, killing bacteria.  
Brown flaked panes a perch  
for the black, white, grey Doves  
silent before their open cote  
in the coal smoke of Bulgaria.

3. two Peacocks in an olive grove,  
Argos alerted, take abrupt flight  
just beyond Athena's ruins  
whose temple archway still stands  
open to the encircling Aegean.  
This Greek island is Balkan, too.

There was another, nameless bird.  
It flew into my friend's window.  
I do not know if it died.  
Maybe it was only stunned  
flying from Macedonia to Macedonia  
and still suffering in the Balkans.