

wilderness I

Dear ~~dove~~, tell me your name. My mouth, bit by drought, has nothing to call you. A loss

not of words but of form, your silhouette  
depleted. What then, a dedication?

With regret, my most belated vow, I write to you, ~~curassow~~, and stroke your black gloss.

I rinse a bluish muck, ~~laughing owl~~, and flick  
your lantern tongue. Even on paper, you are lost.

~~Grackle~~, how to search for you in the engine? Extinct & endangered & threatened, the lists

a torrent to sift, a shattering. The last ~~parrot~~  
is no sky-scraped plummet—rather, you die

digging a dirt hole. I am at a wilderness, echoing as if vastness were emptiness, as if

either could make amends. Did you notice,  
~~petrel~~, how I settled in the water, over land?

Dear ~~night heron~~, you stood still but blinked, plucking frogs from a drain, and slid into

the sea. Dear ~~auk~~ shuffling ice, ~~grebe~~ rippling  
a mirror, I am out with binoculars, spotting your

absence. Even the ~~passenger pigeon~~ vanished, so all dangers are now spoken ones.