

Close

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Quien ha visto viscarsse todo, casi sabe de qué se llena todo.

—Antonio Porchia, *Voices*

*One who has seen everything empty itself is close
to knowing that with which everything is filled.*

Last night the catfight cries split our sleep. Banging
on the window, you spied the wild tom
deserting our barn. Asleep again, we did not hear
what must have happened later, out on the road, thud
of bumper or tire. Late morning, I found him
across from the mailbox, sleek coat matted by rain.

Because he did not belong to me, I picked him up
without pain, noticed with detachment
how rigid the heft of his body, how much an object
he'd become, how thinglike this animal
I'd thought of as muscle-and-yowl vitality
gloved in glossy fur.

This afternoon, during my errands, his emptiness
clings to every living creature I see like a residue
of doom. The chocolate lab riding eager and wiggling
in a pickup bed, dead: a stilled body despite the love
of a household of humans. The soaring crow, an iridescent
carcass. And you. I cannot but imagine now

your empty corpse, a thudding weight, and I
empty even of cries.

