

Starlings in Winter by Mary Oliver

Chunky and noisy,
but with stars in their black feathers,
they spring from the telephone wire
and instantly
they are acrobats
in the freezing wind.

And now, in the theater of air,
they swing over buildings,
dipping and rising;
they float like one stippled star
that opens,
becomes for a moment fragmented,
then closes again;
and you watch
and you try
but you simply can't imagine
how they do it
with no articulated instruction, no pause,
only the silent confirmation
that they are this notable thing,
this wheel of many parts, that can rise and spin
over and over again,
full of gorgeous life.

Ah, world, what lessons you prepare for us,
even in the leafless winter,
even in the ashy city.
I am thinking now
of grief, and of getting past it;
I feel my boots
trying to leave the ground,
I feel my heart
pumping hard. I want
to think again of dangerous and noble things.

I want to be light and frolicsome.

I want to be improbable beautiful and afraid of nothing,
as though I had wings.