

Consoling My Friend, after Her Death

Caroline Rigby Graboys 1945–1998

I pity the sparrow who has lost
her wing, punished by the god
of wings, bound to earth, given up
to painted altars, regarded
as a wonder, or a sign. I pity all
birds torn, gnawed while sleeping,
ripped gluttonously in the beak
of necessity, by storm or whiplash,
or sheer atrophy, like a white
moon at daybreak. The last song,
incomprehensible, the fall
from the highest branch unheard.