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As It Were a Frozen Music

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AS IT WERE A FROZEN MUSIC

Seven Lamps of Architecture: The Lamp of Memory

September scaffolding, the trees letting leaves
out of their lease and across the way
that upside down v of a church is coming down.

Steel in an agony of demolishment, steel,
that to architecture is as black swans are to each other
meaning to mate forever. The way Ruskin said we should build

with an eternity bracing the girders, an always
in the steely skeleton of our designs. The metal
seems to remember those vows, as if each churchly body

joined in matrimony or sent to the wrong side
of the sky asked of it something timeless
and it arcs to stay true to the promise.

We've been witness to the breaking
for months now and tired ourselves from packing boxes
we can hardly mourn the failed romance of lean-to to sky,

can hardly feel that jagged lightning rod jut helpless
and curved where it means to be angled, can't be bothered
with that folded crane of stone, steel, stone, broken brick

and the bright, toy-colored blades of stained glass in pieces as it all
gathers like a catastrophe on the fenced-in lot where happier-we
knocked pecans from the trees. Now we walk by to claim empty

boxes from the liquor store's back door. Now we turn away
from the brokenness inside & out. Now we make our mean
two-branched way back home where down the middle of our living
room moving boxes stack in another skyline of loss.