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Signs of Salvation

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SIGNS OF SALVATION

There needs to be a first sign.
But the third, the fortieth,
become a career for the god.
And then some saint quails
at another seeker’s sign.

Crow tracks, the bellymark of a gull
in frozen sand—take them
as fully sacred. Yet the white brother
thinks black gospel singers
are faking it, those four signs

doing four-part
and eight others in the band.
The individuality of signs
may be like ventral markings
on same-species sparrows

in a museum drawer, sleeping
on their backs, variant as art.
Most pilgrims would only open that drawer once.
But dozens of signs at once—
how could they not believe?

When singers and birds
go into full motion,
when my spirit and my brother’s spirit
are believed to be in spin,
in perpetuity,

how can we not all abet
all careers of all gods?
How can we help but dizzy each other
with more and more
premières of wonders?