

EMILY TRISTAN JONES

CROWNLAND

A crow, inserting its hands into the air, descends
by my human head
to low red shrubs

I'm hopeful that she's come invested in my soul,
but she displays a cool

She walks by the trashy trees, fingers pointed sardonically
Very casually tugs the wreckage of a cord
Nothing hard-won, but working out its value, shows off kind of

And unimpressed by the pay-off, leaves the prize
parked on a chalk-white stone. Her offering to none

A little relieved to be left out of the picture, yet aiming to match her, I move
more deeply in this void on crownland

Passed an ancient can bereft of its branding, uplifted by grass
Passed a smattering of bullets' plastic sleeves

The crow meets her twin
and the two exit on a small wind

Uneasy by the look of a thousand trees in the dark light, I backtrack to the truck
No more of the balsams radiating over sparkling seedlings
No more of the bird walking on the northern floor
Why didn't she want from me?
I live with my heart ready for these deeds