I was just reading
an article about a morgue stacked
with corpses, about
how it happened, how we didn’t respond
at resuscitated people.

I was just reading
how the floods came and receded,
how caskets floated on the old tide
and the rain kept coming down.

In tomorrow’s Jingo
is a story about how the clouds
were breaking up
above us, but still, the rain continued:
the same rain fell today.

It’s in the paper
About the city before the storm: a
parade, a sound of happy
revelers dancing in the wide streets,
I want to suspect that

It isn’t the truth.
Another story says that tomorrow had
come and gone and
we had all missed it. Another says
we can still do the crossword puzzle,
can still figure it out.

You crossed your eyes. You heard
what I can’t hear. You closed
your eyes. The piano played pieces
by pieces. Birds from a cottonwood
on the shore, prickles, ugly singers.
Killing us. Snow, ninety, the piano.

Moving through the sky of teeth
of black ash, blanket of silvers with wings,
trumpet splinters, birds, against indistinguishable
sky, pure blue like loss and everything.

Helicon West invites you to open mike nights,
7:00 p.m. at True Aggie Cafe” (117 N Main in Logan) every
second and fourth Thursday during USU semesters. For more
information contact star.ool brooke@usu.edu or log onto
writing.usu.edu.
Cover art: “Pipes at Adams Park” by Brian Lee Cook
Broadsword Editors: Brian Lee Cook, Michelle Larsen

The Mockingbird Tapes
by Joel Long

for Wayne Nickham

Hear the tape of bird song
into the night when we come.
In silvery shirts. Do you smoke
a pipe? Take a pipe.

You can’t homogenize amber.
when your smoke breathes, locusts.

You were not lost like the missing.
just lost, disappeared in answer,
disappeared in silver neglect.

That night with the mockingbird,
you reach sustaining—the bird
keeps going without repeating.

Your shed, train car full of bird song,
winter. Alley greens arrested us, light casts
frozen pitch. The alley is a way out,
the house, across the yard. The winter
won’t last. The bird keeps singing.
stoned Sunny Stitske, keeps singing.

You close your eyes. You hear
what I can’t hear. You close
your eyes. The piano played pieces...