

# The Messenger

---

Volume 2018  
Issue 1 *The Messenger*, 2018

Article 42

---

2018

## Swallow

Isabella Thomas

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Thomas, Isabella (2018) "Swallow," *The Messenger*: Vol. 2018 : Iss. 1 , Article 42.  
Available at: <https://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger/vol2018/iss1/42>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by UR Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Messenger by an authorized editor of UR Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact [scholarshiprepository@richmond.edu](mailto:scholarshiprepository@richmond.edu).

*There's a swallow where your mouth  
used to be // Isabella Thomas*

Its cape like legs stretch the curve  
of your lip, I see it dancing on your jaw  
chirping words through a sieve so that  
fractured letters find each other again  
when listen becomes silent

I blame the swiftness of its flight,  
freedom unfastened from clipped sentences  
and I wonder if ideas glide through the air  
whether you'd let them ride on its back  
or spear them down with the fork of its tail

I hear through the thick of my thighs  
Only when the holes of my ears are wide enough  
phrases heard, unheard, then not repeated  
and I think maybe a cuckoo has laid its eggs  
in the hallows where my eardrums should be  
hatching translations born of foreign thought  
trailing to the tip of my tongue  
sick of captivity they need to be spoken

My parasitic mouth moves in tandem with  
the wings that flutter in the space where  
your lids and lashes meet  
I'm hoping you twist what I say  
make a nest from the threads of my phrases  
rest in the nuances of my understanding  
So then when I speak  
Your throat is wide enough to swallow  
What's not easily explained