It was a silent spring.

We didn’t realize the canaries
had been silent for months

Because the murmur of human industry said
Don’t stop.
You’re not allowed.
The people need
more.
Those flowers just cause allergies.
Rip the beds clean,
and plant rows of concrete instead.

It was a silent spring.
The wind prowled our grey fields
hungry for prey,
but found only itself
on barren street corners.

Once prevalent honks and shouts
were replaced by the demure hum
of fugitive tires,
escaping to forage
for sparse necessities,
returning empty handed
to their cells
as the stillness
patrolled outside.

Beneath our feet
a multitude of activity buzzed.
Green shoots pushed through the narrow gaps
of our concrete monoliths
tentatively reaching for the sun’s renewed brightness
as winds gently pushed away
the layer of industry that sat over the city.

Opposite the sun salutations,
Roots splayed underground
Working into the cracks of our foundations

Slowly pushing into the vacuums of our minds
germinating until the call of the wild
was too much to bear.
We thrust our snouts to the bars of our cages and howled
submission
powerlessness
brokenness

We cried out for forgiveness
for the scars we left on the lands

But as we had turned our backs on nature,
she too had forgotten us.

Leaving us to rot in our concrete prisons
as canaries flitted from tree to tree
singing their glories to the heavens

amidst the quietest spring I have ever known.