

The very first thing

The very first thing I brought to this house –
a pair of Stanley work gloves
my brother gave me one Christmas.

They've held hundreds of heavy tree trunks,
thousands of bristly branches,
snow shovels, snow tires,
summer tires, rocks,
perching chickadees

and, this morning, the scattered
pieces of the ruffed grouse
that hit the window two days ago –
one withered leg, foot, claw,
two substantial wings, long tail feathers,
the fluffy ruff –

I'd seen the black crow rise –

stripes and spots
in grey, fawn,
dark brown, white

and a bloodied bit of breastbone.

Now the glove holds the downy triangle from
under the base of the tail and
again I admire the exquisite detail of the pattern –
“Some would say that proves the existence of God,”
you had said when we examined it together
right after the crash like a rock
had been thrown at the window.