

The Birds: 4 Poems

written by Guest Contributor | November 7, 2016



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Window Birds Leave Like Ghosts

Neighbors with new projects
like children of nails, beige paint.

Men hammer boards, their cold fevers,
ragged hair, dark and gray.

They scare away wings, swift robins,
fighting blue jays, toddling mockingbirds.

The clatter, alarming, a dirty din
wakes infants and the sick in beds

made of bones that rattle
quietly when a shift is made.

They watch the birds fly by their windows,
moving stains with wonder,

there's a human reserve
to feel better before winter

sets in, a sore, a call to gods,
taking.

Winter Bird

I think she is my father,
reincarnated energy, feathers
grey like his eyes, she fluffs

in the cold wind.

Winter bird, on the patio, comes
to me everyday like brightness,
like a child. She isn't scared of my human
noises, my motions, my eyes.

The bird dives for scarlet berries
skillfully, two each time, her head,
a large marble, the small trees
are scarce scarecrows, waving slight.

I think she is lonely, a warning,
she catapults to bare trees,
a dash in the air, dark stripes
against her body, February takes.

The Largest Murder

Hundreds fly across,
sky fills with black.

We stop in the parking lot
to gawk, mouths open

to let black feathers fall,
choke us, fools to nature.

They find trees,
we can't hear their noise.

Rush hour on Beauregard Street.
our dinner happens.

We return to the lot,
my son remarks, *they're gone*.

He thinks they're off to hunt,
the largest murder, done

deep at night.
The belly of the city holds

them while we sleep.
Call the police.

Empty trees, dark scene,
the crows are missing.

Bird Language

My father
translates
through birds.

Isolation
in a robin chirp
shaking off rain
in lonely branches.

Father affection, delicate
sound of a love bird.
He misses mother
bird, her color is home.

Secret message from
the exotic parrot,
phrases he's learned,
a squawking code.

Anxiety in the fast flap
of a hummingbird's wings,
he meets the others for
sugar on the tongue.

Pride, the loud cry
of an eagle nest bound,
he feeds fish to the young
from the Potomac.

Cold of death,
a crow's caw,
he crossed my path,
I shiver, hover to the ground.

My father, his feathers leave,
one bird at a time,
the sky is his.



Sarah Lilius is the author of the chapbooks *What Becomes Within* (ELJ Publications 2014) and *The Heart Factory* (Black Cat Moon Press, 2016). She has a chapbook forthcoming from Dancing Girl Press. Some of her

journal publication credits include the Denver Quarterly, Court Green, BlazeVOX, Bluestem, Tinderbox, Hermeneutic Chaos, Stirring, Melancholy Hyperbole, and Flapperhouse. Lilius lives in Arlington, VA with her husband and two sons. Her website is sarahlilius.com.