

## NOTHING TO CROW ABOUT ●

Eva-Maria Sher

I.

Two crows took up residence  
in the conifer across from my  
bedroom window, built a nest, and  
proceeded to raise a family.

That was a while ago, and  
I have studied their habits  
and those of their progeny.

They are by no means a quiet tribe.  
In black-frosted dignity they strut  
across my lawn, commenting and  
muttering their apparent displeasure.

Their courtship has its musical  
moments but often sounds  
like an argument spiraling out of control.

When it comes to child raising  
they don't hesitate to let the  
whole neighborhood in  
on their trials and tribulations.

Once the young ones have tumbled  
out of the nest, intense quarrels ensue  
in the branches below.

II.

I dreamt about crows last night.  
A whole flock was flying silently  
outlined against a flaming sky.  
Their wings moved  
in perfect tandem, and I was

keenly aware that this dream was a gift.

But then I felt a great loathing  
for their black-frosted presence, their  
dignified waddle, their quarrelsome  
morning voices, their flight  
across my evening sky—  
felt myself (one of them) veer and  
wing away.

III.

All markers were gone.  
All wilderness.

No one  
belonged to anyone.

My voice  
a strange tongue  
even to myself.

When I looked back—  
I was filled with longing.

IV.

And why won't I let myself  
dance to the tune that is mine?

I am small, I am big  
I am everywhere and nowhere...

And why won't  
I let myself dance?

I am small, I am big  
so big I'd rather not.

V.

That crow, wearing cowboy boots  
and a city attitude—that crow  
in her black and blue coat, that thief  
that trickster. Why does she  
choose to eat French fries from  
city dumpsters, hobble across  
city streets, caw her opinions  
from rusting lamp posts?

VI.

In my morning kitchen  
I can hear the arguments outside.  
I have nothing to crow about.  
The sun's throwing a bright  
rectangle across the pine floor.  
I hear the kettle humming.  
There's toast and blackberry jam.