

Laurie Kruk

First Birds

for Elena, 8 months

There are birds, flying
out of your throat
birr birr, birrr birr

folding diapers, I glance
at empty window
where moments before
wings whirred, beaks dipped
in seed reservoir, tapping glass, then
flashed
back, into absence

leaving only your words
newly-winged--

You stick tiny, tenacious hands
right into the heart of things,
like my opening lips, too close
for a kiss,
touching tongue, teeth and mouth
as if to unlock

—birr, birr birr!—

the swallow-starling fountain
of talk. Of feathers that fall
carelessly all day
from our lips, swept up now into
nests of naming:
daughter. My daughter.

Laurie Kruk

Of meanings
that float, from my mouth
to yours *Mother,*
your mother

and write
the air.