

First Birds

*for Elena, 8 months*

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

and I glance                    up  
at the empty window  
where moments before  
wings whirred, beaks dipped  
in seed reservoir then flashed, back  
into absence:  
leaving your words, winged.

You stick tiny, tenacious hands  
right into the heart of things,  
like my opening lips, too close for a kiss—  
tugging at tongue, teeth and mouth  
as if to unlock  
*birr birr birr!*  
the swallow-starling fountain  
of talk, of sound. Of meanings  
that fly. Those wings, words. And write  
the air.