



From PBWorks

Lyn Lifshin

April

Yes, the loveliest,
a smudge of rouge
lips blotted against
dark boughs. Only
the pear and magnolia
ahead of the cherries'
blush laced, almost
a haze, almost a no
blossom snow any
storm could send
swirling so by the
morning the lake
would have a skin
of rose, the trees

bare with just a fuzz
of green shaking.

The Mourning Doves

for a week they
shuffle twig after
stick, pulling a bit of
twine into the hanging
purple fuchsia, cling to
the plastic edge
weaving pale branches.
There seems no
place to stand. The
birds beat their wings
balancing on the edge,
hovering like pale
humming birds while
frantically trying to
place the twig in the
right spot, make some
thing perfect as a
Shaker chair. Their
cool olive-gray coats
punctuated by iridescent
guava, solid black
smoldering eyes. The
male dove watches
by day, on the roof of
the deck. Neither leave
the nest. Pale white eggs
the size of Milk Duds.
I could lie on the deck
and watch the mother
in the deep petals,
her eyes like a doe. Then,
she wasn't there. The
purple leaves, a
camouflage for the eggs.
It must have been a
crow, perching on the
fence, watching, swooping.
Even in the wild rain the
dove hadn't moved, was
deep in the flowers. It

must have been those dark
wings, the dove pulling
into herself, closer over the
eggs. She might have
already felt hearts beating,
the eggs already moving.
And then, nothing. In myth,
the crow is bearer of bad
news, misfortune, a messenger
of death. It feeds on carrion,
a marauder, pillager, flying
black spike. A dove carcass
someone says near the pines,
half a pond away. The
crow, a splash of cold water

Hotel Kaimana

Palm fronds from the
window, plums, plumeria

When I wake up I smell
ginger in the wind. Pale

tangerine clouds over
Diamond Head. With

the fan off I hear some
one whispering in Chinese,

lie imagining that hand
on a glass of water

near the bed. Unless
you draw the bamboo

tight, the sun moves
between our beds like

a cat let in in the
morning connecting

us loosely. Each bed in
this hotel a bead

threaded in some
bracelet none of us

sees whole

Lyn Lifshin, a widely published poet, lives in Virginia.