

## THINGS THE CROW KNOWS

by Pamela Sumners

The crow knows all the old sayings  
from all the ancient arguments,  
knows “as the crow flies” is just  
a mismeasurement of *is*

God knows the crow watches  
fallen calves outside the fences  
chased away for cleft palates  
or they just ran off too curious  
about the dirt-feel of the logging road  
and God know the crow’s prayer-  
circle the cows when the calves  
come home limp over fieldhand’s arms  
and all the cows gather to mourn  
in low and indecipherable tones.

The crows square off against the man  
at the fence, mocking his property sign,  
making him fear to enter what he posted  
to keep out. The shiny-eyed crows  
keep vigil, impervious of warnings  
against trespass, sentinel themselves  
until the cow eulogies are spent.

The crow knows that God knows  
they are innocent of murder and man  
reviles his kind without cause. The crow knows  
God gave him, as an apology for winter,  
atonement for our superstition, the sweet  
mysterious ability to fly straightaway  
heavenward, home.