THE COMFORT OF CROWS

Hifsa Ashraf and Alan Summers
“The Comfort of Crows arrives like a perfect thirty days of November. I find this spare and wind-driven set of poems, in truth, a source of great comfort.”

— John Stevenson, Managing Editor, The Heron’s Nest

“The extraordinary beauty of Hifsa and Alan’s collaborative poetry captures a mystical darkness, where mosaic rain is gently woven into velvet raven shadows. Their poetic path is elegantly crafted and brings together the classic haiku tradition with contemporary aesthetics.”

— Anna Maris, Member of the Swedish Haiku Society

“Crows are intelligent, wild birds who will form strong relationships with humans. I admire everything about them. The poems are thought-provoking and elegant, and embrace the different facets of life: illness, loss, death, and the courage and strength to carry on.”

— Kris Tsujikawa, Crow Journalist
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Velvet Dusk Publishing
Dedicated to

all those who dare to face their fears
and
the crows who look after Alan
Acknowledgements

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We wish to thank those who have published our work, and all editors, journals, and presses that support writers around the world.
THE COMFORT OF CROWS
a weaving sky
circumnavigating
into synonyms

fireflies in the deep woods lynching silence
dark veins
rolling a boulder
up to the hilltop

into the day of disappearing corners Vega star
mosaic rain:
the cul de sac
of shadow

(after Sylvia Plath)
oak and alder
the firecrest weaves
a restless song

Rorschach test—
awakening from hibernation
preliminary diagnosis
the flying crows tattoo
on her back
circus moon its shadows its animals
all fingers and thumbs
the river bends & turns us
into other songs

raven shadow all I have to surrender
dark news
the comfort
of crows

midnight blue the contrail circling London
rain on the river—
when does white become
its darkest colour

crows cawing in the forest 5th generation warfare
sigh of Helios—
some dark echoes meander
through the grassland

a dreaming forest busy as Hitchcock
constellations
my consternation
in morse

black lace elderberry overshadowing my demons
Land’s End
I see my voice
in the sea

Perseids weaving dreams out of the blue
an hour of silence
two tides paint
the stygian horizon

blue hour songs as if Shakespeare in Klingon
an owl’s moon
watering the black
between stars

falling leaves my way out of disillusionment
jackdaws in snow
thumbing through
all our dreams

river fog the narrative that needs an impression
fifth kind encounter
humans replace crows
as an idiom of murder
every goodbye falls differently last snow
Hifsa Ashraf is from Pakistan. She is an award-winning poet, story writer, and the co-editor of *Haiku Commentary*. A multilingual poet, she writes in English, Urdu, and Punjabi. Her work has been widely published in various international poetry journals, anthologies, and magazines. Hifsa is currently working on a tanka collection of real stories about the refugees who migrated to Pakistan.

Alan Summers is co-founder of Call of the Page: www.callofthepage.org