

Lyn Lifshin

THE WOMAN WHO TALKED TO HITCHCOCK'S BIRDS

she said she could
talk to them, they knew
she could understand.
She said they'd been
patient but they had
issues, they'd waited,
they just wanted
freedom. But they had
had enough, they
wanted revenge, they
wanted justice. She
was bird like in her own
way, a beak of a nose,
panicky motions like
a scared bird. They
related to her, not to
those who stole their
feathers for hats,
shot them down. One
said her mate had been
shot down, cooked
and eaten. Some were
plucked for pillows
and coats, the trim on
designer dresses.
Enough was enough.
And what of the birds
in cages, cooed over
but never allowed
a free life? They'd
been given warning: a
rush of feathers
down a chimney, a
sea gull swooping down
for a peck. It wasn't
enough. It was hardly
noticed. People flock
to the country, slash down
trees we nest in. Do
they care about a trail of
eggshells, the smog and

wires our radar can't work
in? And they call a few
smashed windows, a few
shattered cups terror and chaos?