

***The Crows***

Middle-aged women are flocking to see the crows. They stand on sidewalks, on lawns, and they stare at the tops of telephone poles, the highest branches of trees; they sit on picnic tables in the park, perch at the fountain's edge to watch the crows walk slowly through strips of sunlight between trees, their black eyes sharp as scissors, knives, razors, black feathers brightly purpled by the light, satin green and blue, shocking streaks of sudden red shining off the blackest backs of crows who never look at the women, crows who walk, stop, open wide capes of wing and flex their black stick legs to enter the air; they rise to fly, calling each other by name, calling each other's names out of the sky.

**Judith Arcana's** most recent book is the poetry collection *What if your mother* (2005); among her prose books is *Grace Paley's Life Stories: A Literary Biography*. Her poems, stories and essays have been published in journals and anthologies for more than thirty years. In 2007, her work appeared in *5AM*, *Persimmon Tree*, *White Ink*, *Bridges*, *Umbrella*, *ARM Journal* and *Passager*. Read more at [juditharcana.com](http://juditharcana.com)