

The blossom

by [Jeanne Murray Walker](#) in the [October 19, 2010](#) issue

Don't tell me I didn't see it, the red flower budding,
that radiant tiny shirt our hibiscus pulled on
to celebrate the summer. Don't tell me the bloom was not—

because it was—starting to open in the hands
of clean light this morning, when I saw it rustle,
fan out its tail, try out its wings, and flutter.

Then he turned and tipped his black bib
toward our hedge, tucked up his feet, and shaped
his fist-size body to an arrow, trusting air.

Listen, I know the facts, why he couldn't have.
But I heard the red hibiscus blossom beat,
rest, thrash, take wing across our yard and settle

at the feeder. There he grasps the perch
with his gray feet and cocks his head and bobs
his flamey crest and cracks a sunflower seed

in his fat rosy beak. Call him a fiesta
for the eye, the highest note in the song
my voice can't reach, but still somehow can sing.

He takes the green world into his body,
turns everything he sees a furious scarlet,
as if it's easy. And how could it be otherwise?