

whiptail: journal of the single line poem

issue 2 · january 2022



Detail of Plate 152

by our thomas

a little birdhouse in your soul



wind tunnel i look through a gull's third eyelid

-Debbie Strange, Canada

the patter of water on water be quiet curlew

-Tim Gardiner, UK

barely a whimbrel the breathing roots of mangroves

-Robyn Cairns, Australia

what wars weigh peacock

-Raghav Prashant Sundar, India

feeding on rice the zen teachings of my free pigeon

-Richa Sharma, India

forgive me, peregrine, the summit is still a lonely place

-Tim Gardiner, UK

as it comes pipit

-Hemapriya Chellappan, India

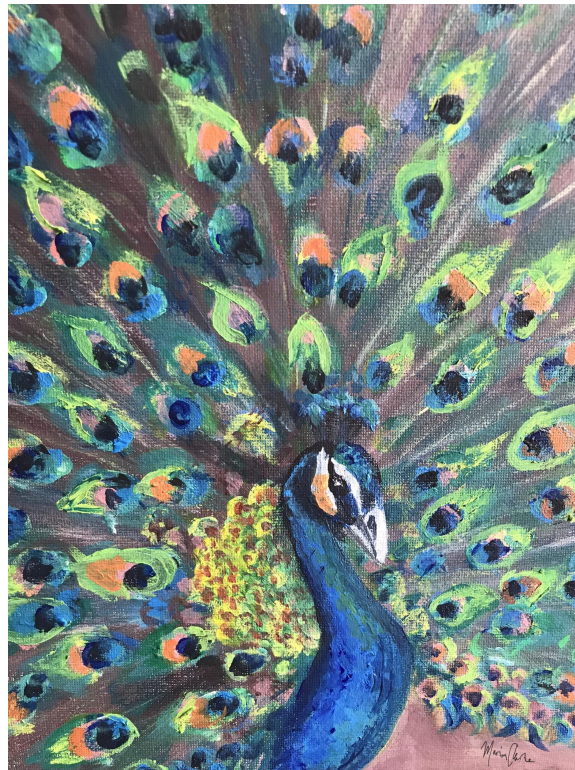
wren song the weight of a soul

-John Hawkhead, UK

across infinity aleph by aleph the cardinals

-Pippa Phillips, USA

a thing with feathers



Flamboyance

Marion Clarke, Northern Ireland

bleeding through the threadbare curtain a red munia song

-Hemapriya Chellappan, India

rewilding my amygdala the palm warbler's chirps

-Shloka Shankar, India

hypnosis session the blackbird's song in me

-Mirela Brăilean, Romania

creeping sepia the threshold of the forest becomes song thrush

-Alan Summers, UK

caladrius waits for belief to become again

-Kathryn Reilly, USA

the river taking wing with each upstroke of his prayer

-Julie Schwerin, USA

a bird that flies and the flight of a bird spring morning

-jim kacian, USA

thrush's song everything tickety-boo

-Tomislav Sjekloća, Montenegro

birdcraft!



looping through my finity hummingbird

-Shloka Shankar, India

and butter (doesn't) fly all these iridescent feathers

-Alfred Booth, France

bird into the bird shape of a cloud

-Melinda B Hipple, USA

old tea leaves the complex fortunes of crows

-our thomas, USA

wood smoke and the downward turn of the bluejay's call

-john hudak, USA

burrowing undercover the screams and howls

-Julie Bloss Kelsey, USA

trill night bird sheets erupt in your song

-Alfred Booth, France

singing with sewn lips the bird god as bait

-Réka Nyitrai, Romania

a last scattering of birds at dusk these late poems

-jim kacian, USA

in the most common language of the crane

-Pere Risteski, North Macedonia

season of hollow soul



Crow

David A. Berger, USA

grackle storm descending into black thoughts

-Jonathan Roman, USA

imagining we were all black crows

-R.D. Bailey, USA

a lark with weights tied to my legs still I place all these stones in my pockets

-Künney, USA

a brown pelican's wingspan the darkness we carry

-R.D. Bailey, USA

till it tells the tale just a budgie

-Tapan Mozumdar, India

dusk lament a lesser goldfinch

-Sarah Paris, USA

early december a black phoebe calls down the night

-Marcie Wessels, USA

fresh anxiety the shrew skull in this owl pellet

-Joshua Gage, USA

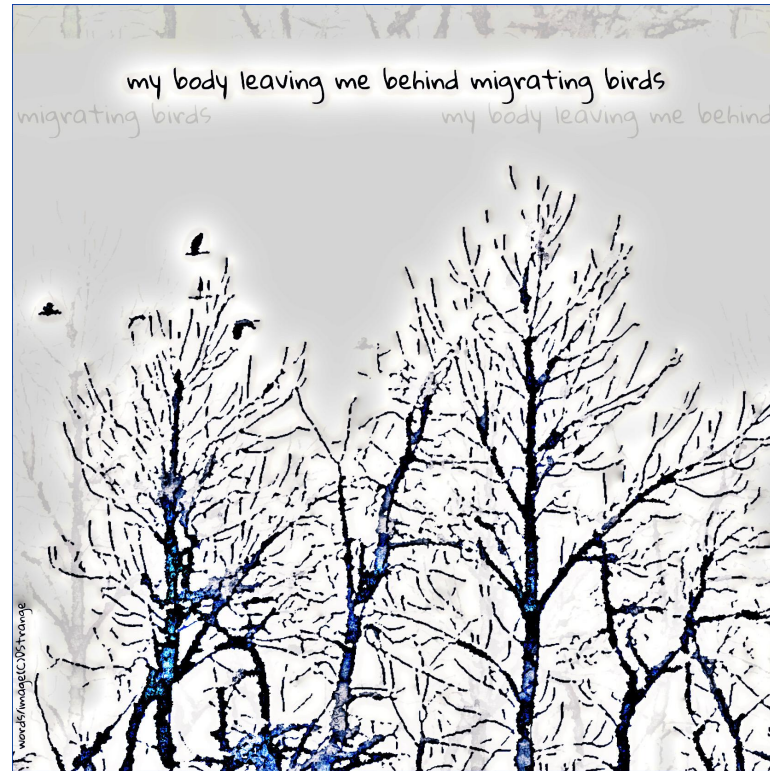
a shadow's shadow crows

-Brad Bennett, USA

the outcome not as i expected a leucistic crow

-Polona Oblak, Slovenia

migrations and destinations



my body leaving me behind migrating birds

-Debbie Strange, Canada

a long stretch of sky heron

-Brad Bennett, USA

following the creek home dark wings

-Glenn G. Coats, USA

night migration the moon and the moon and the moon

-Sue Courtney, New Zealand

children cross one bridge and the other migratory birds

-Pravat Kumar Padhy, India

mountains, more mountains, some more mountains and then a Himalayan bulbul

-Vandana Parashar, India

cheERP cheERP kireji CHEerp

-Marianne Paul, Canada

transcribed across backyard snow the calligraphy of sparrows

-Joseph P. Wechselberger, USA

deep snow the turkey's glide-sink glide-sink

-Mary Stevens, USA

threads in the nest



Two Crows

David A. Berger, USA

her empty shoes housebound the skylark's song

-Meg Arnot, UK

this life of burrowing burrowing owls

-Claire Vogel Camargo, USA

trying to excavate the owl from my father's well of forgetfulness

-Jo Balistreri, USA

featherbed the egg keeps its secret

-Pippa Phillips, USA

mother's blues she fed them peanuts and flew away

-Kath Abela Wilson, USA

i was truly a bird when i left him out of love

-Richa Sharma, India

no matter how lightly I tread the shorebirds flee as far as I can remember this relationship

-Ryland Shengzhi Li, USA

storm petrels until nothing left of your name

-Lew Watts, USA

purple finch I change my life story

-Ken Slaughter, USA

in formation



Reed Whispers

Robyn Cairns, Australia

Yellowhammer

the shell gland inks the egg like wet paper—devil's scrawl or poetry

madness runs a fine vein of moonlight through my mothers

I will not run down the street naked and singing I will not run down the street naked singing
and I will naked and run down singing the street not I naked singing street will run not the down
and and the street run naked will I singing not down

from *yelambre* from *yelwe amore*, which means *a yellow kind of bird*

a bird makes words out of its body that no one can read

a mouth full of pleasure and pain is a bird

the roots of *bunting* are unknown

-Jess Wright, UK

Circadian

witching hour fight or flight the nighthawk booms

rise the frost ferns creeping a wren around my window

midmorning measures the sharp scarlet tang of tanager song

flock after moving day flock after moving wild geese

murmuration shadow ballet turning dancers into evening

another midnight discourse mockingbird

-m. shane pruet, USA

Sleep Lessons From Birds

there are dates in the year when the nights are so bright owls become larks

remember the kindness of sleep is winged but claw-footed

sleep looks like an eagle-sized nightjar, poised to swoop down where it spots you

in a nest, on a tree branch, a rooftop, a trunk hole, mid-river, or down in the earth: choose wisely

dream of the sky, dream of other birds, dream of yourself as one stitch in a murmuration

close your grip, let the tendons in your talons tighten as you perch, and you won't worry about falling

watch out for the moths, they steal tears while you sleep, don't let them drink from your eyes

if you ask the swifts you should sleep on the wing, once you are high enough to glide

-Laura Theis, UK

Credits for section names:

“A Little Birdhouse in Your Soul” is from the song “Birdhouse in Your Soul” by the band They Might be Giants.

“A Thing with Feathers” is a line from the Emily Dickinson poem that begins:

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

“Season of Hollow Soul” is derived from the song “Season of Hollow Soul” by k.d.lang.

Founding Editors:

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