



Bird-Understander

BY CRAIG ARNOLD

Of many reasons I love you here is one

the way you write me from the gate at the airport
so I can tell you everything will be alright

so you can tell me there is a bird
trapped in the terminal all the people
ignoring it because they do not know
what do with it except to leave it alone
until it scares itself to death

it makes you terribly terribly sad

You wish you could take the bird outside
and set it free or (failing that)
call a bird-understander
to come help the bird

All you can do is notice the bird
and feel for the bird and write
to tell me how language feels
impossibly useless

but you are wrong

You are a bird-understander
better than I could ever be
who make so many noises
and call them song

These are your own words
your way of noticing
and saying plainly
of not turning away
from hurt

you have offered them
to me I am only
giving them back

if only I could show you
how very useless
they are not

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