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To Bukowski, #44

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MARK WISNIEWSKI

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“it’s a shockingly
nice-looking bird” she said & the old man sat up & said “that’s what I
used to think” “before your wife turned on you?” “yes”

she stepped
to the window unlocked
it raised it 2 inches
the old man didn’t move so she raised it 6 more

the parakeet shivered blinked let its feathers
settle hopped onto the gritty side
of the sill she sat beside the old man her hand found his titanium

knee “you sure we should
let it sit there?” he asked

the parakeet dropped
itself to the strip
of desert beside the dry-rotted siding & the birdshit-stained lot

it hopped again then again then stood in the dark like a small faded
statue of St. Jude

“gonna get pecked
to hell by those crows in that olive tree” the old man said “those
crows” she said carefully “are gone”