

## ANTONY DI NARDO / The Significance of September

Peacocks whistle. Pirates push off to sea and fight for the crow's nest. An oriole of desire comes to rest on the blossom of your breast. Along the palisades of Canary Wharf, all this business for the birds.

Popinjay, popinjay, the winner is the popinjay, not the errant bookstore penguin. And the magpie draws circles full of silver tongues and trinkets. Out back, man, and robin gets the first warm wood of spring. Look, the plover lends a hand, the fish have fled.

Build a swing set for the cardinal and his russet bride and you'll see beauty somewhere. This morning a meaningless dove was all the moon could bear. And the cha-cha pigeons on the ha-ha, afraid of feathers failing.

Bleak as beak on the raven she speaks of the underworld, and how's your mama real. Days of wrens and blueberries and maple shade and we'll go barefoot, too. The sparrows take turns and reappear everywhere on Earth.

All of a sudden a forged wing and the kingfisher's gone by. Owls and owls of a lonesome night on the perch of an arrested bough. Sing song, the blackbird's been. And what's up with the grackle and the racket of the rabble collected at the table?

Only a fleeting moment, a quick glimpse and that's the tit bird. Osprey. Osprey. And chanting ready-or-not-here-I-come here it comes. Oh, the rose-breasted grosbeak hath the bone of a sunflower in its speech.

Call down the downy woodpecker not down from the nest for the next feast yet. Field mice a-fear a falcon's first shadow, the scat of their flesh on the windshield. But know the rarely-sighted hoopoe and know the ins and outs of the pinwheel.

As sleek as swan can swim, as slippery as a signal from the shore, as often as not. There goes the gallows' swallow weaving the wind, all the Zorro of a heart cleft in two. Yellow waxwing, I owe you my life for coming this close.

And you, fickle finches, aren't you all just so scientifically free?