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Omi the Amazing

by Deborah Gillespie

For seven years we lived with a parrot,
an Indonesian Red Lory
born in Dubuque.

Admiring his ruby plumage,
more brilliant than a cardinal,
we carried Omi from room to room,

porch to porch,
where he perched
on a swing my husband made.

We sat watching him, entertained for hours,
juggling on his back with his feet,
like a kitten or baby seal,

hanging upside down like a bat,
talking and whistling,
gurgling and cackling.

One night I dreamed the bird became
my husband, wearing his jeans and a beard,
or maybe my husband turned into the bird,

willing himself into this winged creature
to become center of attention,
a reincarnated

object of affection,
leading the easy life
until one night,

one dreadful night,
a cat came stalking
and bird became cat.

