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March Wings

William Snyder Jr.

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MARCH WINGS

by William Snyder Jr.

Mais voila l'oiseau-lyre

qui passe dans le ciel

l'enfant le voit

l'enfant l'entend

l'enfant l'appelle:

Sauve-moi

joue avec moi

oiseau!

Jacques Prevert

This row house of narrow rooms—
storm glass shut, windows sealed,
shades drawn down. But for one.
My kitchen window— this shade up,
this pane free— for light,
for strength.

And through this window, the house
across the way, backyard sketched
in winter leaf, scattered twig,
deck-rail planters
topped with ancient snow.

A brick walk— the bricks
seem random, stained. I drink coffee,
cup the hot, glass cup in my palms,
press my forehead

against the inner pane. Then birds.

Small birds. A troop

of grayish birds

with black and chestnut wings

flit here and there across the way,

perch on naked, brown limbs,

alight on bricks, peck and preen.

They sing. I think they sing.