

FOR THE BIRDS



In the playground outside the church
the chickens had come home to roost
in a manner of speaking.

The man had, himself, roosted
inside the bell tower
looking out over the playground below
seeing his collaborators scratching at the dirt
simulating what they conceived as
the form of avian art they were destined to create.

Alas, the man discerned none of its namesake,
save for a lone gull bracing against the wind
having strayed from her usual haunts
in the air above the nearby bay of Bodega.

Where were her companions?

He wondered.

Did they assume they were but extras
in the drama about to unfold?

From his perch he began to see things as *they* might.
Gliding down to roost in the playground by the church
partaking in a scene of carnage and death
turning a site of childhood imagination
into a graveyard of ghosts.

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April 15, 2023

Saturday

Prompt: "Yes, the man is a tower of birds" from the poem Farewell to Friends by Illya Kaminsky.

Credits: [Publicity still](#) from [The Birds](#) (1963)

The prompt today is the line "Yes, the man is a tower of birds" from the poem Farewell to Friends by Illya Kaminsky.

His poem is below, and I encouraged participants to use other lines as leaping off points if they spoke more to them.

A Farewell to Friends by Illya Kaminsky
after Nikolai Zabolotsky
Yes, the man is a tower of birds, I write my friends
into earth, into earth, into earth.

There, with lantern in hand,
a beetle-man greets his acquaintances.

You stand in white hats, long jackets,
with notebooks of poems,

you have for sisters wild carnations,
nipples of lilacs, splinters and chickens.

Go now, I will write a biography of rain,
the pages turn--

your first steps across the room.