



## Bird-Understander

BY CRAIG ARNOLD

Of many reasons I love you here is one

the way you write me from the gate at the airport  
so I can tell you everything will be alright

so you can tell me there is a bird  
trapped in the terminal all the people  
ignoring it because they do not know  
what do with it except to leave it alone  
until it scares itself to death

it makes you terribly terribly sad

You wish you could take the bird outside  
and set it free or (failing that)  
call a bird-understander  
to come help the bird

All you can do is notice the bird  
and feel for the bird and write  
to tell me how language feels  
impossibly useless

but you are wrong

You are a bird-understander  
better than I could ever be  
who make so many noises  
and call them song

These are your own words  
your way of noticing  
and saying plainly  
of not turning away  
from hurt

you have offered them  
to me I am only  
giving them back

if only I could show you  
how very useless  
they are not

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Source: *[manuscript]* (Poetry Foundation, 2009)