

JANE MCKIE

My Daughter and the Hyacinth Macaw

Last night it plucked your left eye,
held the orb up to the light—sly jeweller,
miner of desire.

What did it see?
Blue feathers: your fear of flight.
Black tongue: your fear of death.

Your nightie streaked with violet
guano, I take you in my arms.
Mum, you say, I hate that bird.

During the day we'll laugh it off,
squawk at each other, *Pieces of eight!*
At least that's what I hope—

that dreams can be ironed
like dresses, filed
like civil buttons.

I hate that bird.

Saying it will make it real.
Instead I cradle you, try to believe—
It's only a nightmare, darling.