

the parrot

mary jarman

(With apologies to Edgar Allen Poe)

Once upon a morning cheery, while I studied language theory,
Trying to decipher syntax, parody and more—
In my head words were swirling, like a windblown flag unfurling,
When I heard a gentle flapping, flapping at my study door.
“That stupid parrot,” I muttered, “flapping at my study door”—
“Getting feathers on the floor.”

Back to my scrutiny of rhyme, glancing nervously at the time,
I tried to pen my anecdote once more—
Looking for clever alliteration, some obscure connotation,
When again there came a flapping, flapping at my study door.
“I’ll let the parrot in,” I grumbled, “flapping at my study door”—
“Then I can do my work once more.”

Once inside the parrot flew, around my head a time or two,
Then settled on a shelf, high on the wall—
She looked at me with gleaming eyes, like sunlight from azure skies,
And settled in to watch me, yes to watch me, that was all.
“How can I work like this,” I sighed, “with a parrot on the wall?”
“Perhaps the bird will fall.”

Again I started on my theory, now feeling just a little weary,
Of hyperbole and simile, once more—
Quatrains and couplets so cliché, they filled my poor heart with dismay,
“How can I mend these wretched lines, reform these lines that I abhor?”
“Some simple remedy, sent to liberate me, and satisfy once more.”
Quoth the parrot “Metaphor.”