

# Parrot

*by* Andrew Stancek

"A parrot? Are you crazy, Mirko? What are we going to do with a parrot? Who's around to spend time with it?"

Mirko shivered, pulled the heavy blanket around himself. He took a peanut out of the bag, holding it between two fingers offered it to the bird. The parrot squawked, grabbed it. "I'm here, Dad. I'll look after it," Mirko said.

The father poured his beer, made sure the head was just right, sipped, burped, stared into the glass. The parrot screeched, scratched his tail feathers. The father glanced at Mirko, scratched the top of his head sticking out his tongue and grimacing. They both broke into laughter.

"Does he at least swear?" the father said, wiping his cheeks.

"Your mother does sailors," the parrot screeched.

"We'll get along just fine then," the father roared. "I'm used to the place being cold, Mirko, but it looks like an early winter this year." He burped again, looked at the dirty plates, empty bottles, spilled mustard on the counter. "Tomorrow we'll get wood for the stove."

