

# Must Not Be a Working Bird

*by* Jerry Ratch

I said, "That bird is hungry."  
The sparrow was eyeing both of us  
At our separate outside café tables  
As it hopped around looking for crumbs.

Then it would look up at us  
Expectantly. When she found some blessed  
Small scrap of muffin, she would fly up  
With it to her streetlight nest.

"Bird's hungry," I repeated  
When the man eyed me, watching him  
Like some kind of bird myself.  
The man kept reading his paper, grim,

Grumpy, shaking his head.  
"Must not be a working bird," he said.  
Quite possibly, on the inside,  
The human was already dead.

