

Migration

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“Monk parakeets first arrived in Queens in the '60s when a crate of the exotic birds destined for the local pet shops broke on the runway of JFK airport, setting them all free.”

—*The Monk Parakeet: A New York Success Story*

“Donald Trump has vowed to initiate the largest deportation operation in American history . . . an unprecedented escalation of immigration enforcement.”—*Forum Magazine*

“Queens is the most diverse county in the continental U.S.”—*ABC7 New York*

The parakeets in Queens have no idea
how far they are from where they ought to be.
Feathered grandkin of birds who were released
a continent so far across the sea
they can't go home. Now home is what they see—
the World's Fair, the Mets, the tennis courts
where Venus and Serena won their fame,
LGA, JFK, and every sort
of foreign person with every foreign name,
all come here to America to find
a better place than the one they left behind.
But not the parakeets. They are native now.
Being bred and born on these sacred shores
has made them more deserving somehow
of the strange paradise that is Queens
than our fellow flesh-and-blood human beings.