

Eye on the sparrow

by [Sydney Lea](#) in the [May 18, 2010](#) issue

—for Bruce Richards

Tiny, almost an anti-weight,
if it blew off my palm in the wind I might not even notice.
Dashing against the back porch glass,
the bird fell onto logs I'd stacked there, or rather heaped.
I loaded our wood more neatly out in the shed
but this jumble of lumber reminded me
my life lacked grace.

Wind didn't kill the bird but misprision.
My oldest daughter had just given birth to twins,
and I was thinking of them of course
when I saw the sparrow. We're in a hopeful season.
I'd like to imagine new beginnings,
not ponder for instance the self-styled Christian Warriors
I heard about lately, devoted to killing police,

to launching Armageddon.
They claim these are days of Antichrist,
and I could almost agree—for other reasons.
Thou shalt not murder is among the Commandments,
I'd remind the warriors,
all nine of whom live in Michigan,
a place near hell in this near Depression.

Days are bad worldwide,
though in gospel God's eye takes in the smallest sparrow.
Vile hooligans among us storm
over having a president who's other than white.
We're all human, and none of us saved,

and—as the old Greek said—
it might have been best if we'd never been born.

And yet to imagine a world devoid of hope
is too easy and lazy, I decide.
Outside the odors of spring fly in on the wind:
damp mulch, old ice, wet mud and sap.
The sugar-makers hope for a few more gallons,
hope for a few more years, to be with my children.
I open the stove, sweep the bird in.