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Turned into a Bird

John Whalen

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Turned Into A Bird

For Kevin

Your letter asking twenty five dollars
Slept in my pocket a week before turning
Into a red bird who shouted "Hurrah!"

In front of Gunther's Grocery. The men
And their dogs were confused, as was I.
We all began barking, the red dusk came.

When that bird became night on wings
The mountains reddened, we stopped our
Circling, dogs became birds.

If you had seen everything red as it was
When the dusk flew, if you had seen the stone
Houses and girls on porches, quiet, red as

Cut cedar along the gullies, on top of the hills,
You would have flown into a bird with me,
Now travelling, now diving.

John Whalen