

Token Failure

A bird flew hard into the back glass.

It sat stunned or dying.
It sat in a bunch on the ground,
breathing heavy, beak wide open.

I went for a run.

Phrases came context free.
A pipe dream in a pipette.
A too-private privation.
World, world, world—
a German philosopher's
paper curl.

Light spikes pierced
the silhouette of a cloud,
like points on a crown

pointing down—
My eyes drew spiralways
into and out of love with the world.

With the paper curl.
I spent the last of the run still
not thinking of the bird,
trying to remember the third line of Szyborska's
"Under A Certain Little Star,"
stuck on the fact of it the more

the fact eluded me.

Back home the bird was gone.
But it found its way on, or into a mouth.
Every day contains a token failure—

Sometimes I'm it.