

The Black Parrot

By Dorothy Nimmo

*Kill the black parrot. Choke the sodding bird,
it never said a kind thing or a true word,
or if it did that wasn't what I heard.*

*I only heard it squawking in my ear
things no-one in their right mind wants to hear
that made me cold with shame and white with fear.*

*Behave yourself. Control yourself. You know
you don't think that, you only think you do.*

You can't just please yourself, I told you so.

You're being selfish. It's for your own good.

You must. You must not. But you know you should.

If you try harder, I am sure you could.

I'm disappointed in you. Never say I didn't tell you.

But you had your own way, you'd not be told. There'll be a price to pay.

Where was it polly learned that canting word?

It's time to wring its neck, the stupid bird.

What made us think that was the voice of God?

1. Nimmo (1993, 3-4)