

# The Birds: The Parakeet and The Fig Tree

written by Guest Contributor | October 29, 2020



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*holding in one clawed foot, the fruit, the parakeet thrusts  
its beak into the brilliant fig, plucking hard at the pith*

*it's another one of those nights, my fingers  
can't stop working the screen*

*the beak is small, barely the width of a thumbnail. yet with it,  
the parakeet works, steadily and surely extricating*

*i have been here before. scrolling, always scrolling,  
thumb going swish-tap / swishhh-tap*

*the bird works past the fruit's dusky wall into the soft, ripe flesh.  
the sweet, astringent tannins tickle its tongue*

*photos of her in new york, manhattan bridge in the background,  
celebrating a birthday, friend's wedding in pink, some bar  
called mood ring, park, rooftop, park, rooftop, beach,  
i skim again the captions for brief wit / swish-tap /*

*if a parakeet does not eat enough fresh fruit and vegetable  
it suffers from vitamin deficiency. figs make good fruit.*

*i dig deeper what is it i want, really? unearth old accounts  
her life? a past, a class her poems? stories, playlists  
lovers, dreams swish-/tap/ or just her, just all  
of her? swish-tap / swish-*

*-t-tap*

*one loosened finger—the sweet fruit descends from the tree.*

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**Rachel Kuanneng Lee** writes poetry. Her work appears in or is forthcoming at *Quarterly Literary Review Singapore*, *The Tiger Moth Review*, *wildness* and the *Live Canon 2020 Anthology*. She is a Brooklyn Poets Fellow. She is also co-founder of a data science startup and hopes that someday, she might be able to make a coherent narrative out of her career choices, even if today is not quite that day. You can find her online at [rachel-lee.me](http://rachel-lee.me).

*featured photo by [shubham patle](#) on [Unsplash](#)*