

THE NEWBORN BIRD AT THE HOUSE PARTY

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OUT ON
THE
SHELVES

At a friend's party and you don't really know
Anyone, tangents and friends-of-friends,
And a bottle of sweet warm wine
Tucked under your arm, freshly bought,
Just for this special night.
It's a big confession booth
With loud music and old carpeting
And you tell people things you haven't even
Really told yourself, yet.



Spilling your secrets is easier
When tired and full of alcohol;
It's so simple to let them fall out
In a tumbled jumble of confusion
And half-finished wonderings,
Hypotheticals, deepest desires.
Electronic music that's been on the radio
Pounds frantic in your chest
Like a second-heart panic attack.

It's a wonderful curiosity to be
With so many people like yourself,
To be able to speak freely without
Fear of judgement or misunderstanding.
There's still fear, of course,
Because there always will be in some way,
But it's a small thing curled in
Your belly, instead of a rearing beast.
Breathe and be at ease.

You have to raise your voice
To release the bird from inside the cage
And see it fly, feathered, free,
Pure and white peaceful dove.
Let go of the guilt and self-doubt
And just watch it glide around the room,
Bringing a second self from between your ribs—
Come out into the open, a whole new you,
Fresh and still bleeding, raw but wholly yours.

