FEEDING THE PIGEONS (Madrid)

Every morning
the old woman’s dog
romps in the park,
while from her bag
she feeds the pigeons
a daily ritual
from one with barely enough
to buy the seeds,
but a deed in which coos
wash her spirit clean.
Morning dew
awakens in the shadows
of ash and pines,
a place for reflection
curbed only by broken bottles
along the path,
by newspaper pages
dispersed on benches
in different angles
at the wind’s discretion,
remnants of misery
that survived the night
and too much drink
of one gone searching
for a better day
as I return full circle
to where cooing pigeons
mirror the charity
of the old woman
who bequeaths me
tranquility for courage
under the rising sun.

By James Brandenburg