

Malte C. Ebach

ANSCHAUUNG

Mother's father my Opa
Squawks in Low German tongue
Breeding parrots and cockatiels
Has turned him into one.

Vogel Opa points, "*Schau* die dat mal an!"
I turn to see an old man
 "Nee! Dat"
I look, he changes

A young sailor stoking
 Boat adrift laden with timber
A solider wounded
 Red stained Russian fields
I look from his crow's nest
 I see my family
 Mother, my cousins
The old man reappears

"Jauh" I murmur
 "Ick hep dat sehn"

Die Anschauung Opa knows, "Kieken!"
I only see parrots and suggest, "*Melopsittacus undulatus?*"
The old man gives me a look
I am a scientist! I shrug
Budgerigars transform in Opa's mind's eye
A new breed appears
Opa has work to do

Forever I keep him in my mind, for form is not a picture,
Not faded, hidden in dusty boxes, lying crooked among Mother's prints

Opa is alive in my mind, morphing from sepia coloured youth
Transforming to a bird-like sage awkwardly shifting along his perch