

Michael Fournier

POEM FOR JOHN CHEEVER

You turn into a street
Where a man screams at pigeons
flying into fragmentary sky,

so you don't take that turn, but go
into an alley where another screams,
this one at a closed mailbox,
the sky above now seamless blue.

You continue through, and the alley opens
onto a sprawl of lawn you take days
to cross, thirsting under constant noon.

At the end of that lawn is a white picket gate,
through which you pass, marching smartly
up a flagstone walkway to the door
of a stucco house, and using the key

in your hatband, you open this door.
You go to the living room, kick off your shoes,
mix a rocks vodka martini, and wait.