

Winning Poems in 2021 CFCP, Inc., Annual Contest

5. Nature, Third Place

**Warbling**

I do not write of patterned geese;  
I do not know the names of bird friends,  
though I do hear the variances in morning sounds  
hidden well among the trees

    I have searched them out  
    only to find clusters of leaves  
    birdlike in pretense—  
    paper silhouettes mocking me

voices call

a high shrill followed by three taps and a tut  
a high shrill followed by three taps and a tut  
then a symphony of staccato— all in one breath  
    seeming to stop mid-sentence

    a following silence ensues

    and I search for sounds

my ear reaches among the branches

past paper maché pigeons

yellow-throated wooden warblers—

    nothing, nothing, nothing

    stillness in a community of leaves

    not a twit from my dear mockingbird now

I suppose he was expressing his awakened  
thoughts in his “morning pages”

then on to the work that must be done.

Perhaps I was wrong. I do know this bird.

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