

JOAN LEOTTA

Birds

Crows, (those) sable harbingers
(give way to)
gulls who float
and rest upon the air.
Songbirds of the woods
(build) nests among
orchard trees, their
outbursts of melody
like a brook let
loose from wintry chains.
(I stand with) swallows
(who) address the heart.

ABOUT THE POEM & AUTHOR

“Birds” was created from “Buds and Bird Voices” in *Mosses from an Old Manse* by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1846). About the poem and the process of composing it, Joan Leotta writes:

This was my first attempt at found poetry, and I worked to enhance the original meaning of the work with my own perspective on the topic of the passage I chose—birds. Words not from the base work are in parentheses, and I hope that my selected words add a new beauty to the topic.

Joan Leotta is the author of *Dancing Under the Moon* and *Morning by Morning* (Origami Poems Project 2016 and 2020), *Languid Lusciousness with Lemon* (Finishing Line Press 2017), and *Feathers to Stone* (forthcoming from Main Street Rag). Her work has also appeared in *Stanzaic Stylings*, *The Ekphrastic Review*, *The Wild Word*, *Visual Verse*, *Writing in a Woman’s Voice*, and elsewhere. She lives in Calabash, North Carolina, and can be found online at facebook.com/joanleotta.

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