

Cedar Waxwings

by [Jacob Stratman](#) in the [August 16, 2017](#) issue

A family of Cedar Waxwings has gathered
in the large, bare Oak in the corner
of the town cemetery. Like the scratchy
hesitancy of a needle on wax or my son's attempt
at whistling through a mouth of missing teeth,
their song turns in choir with the wind, low but sharp
this morning. Speckled high in the branches,
yards above the gray stones under the tree,
plotted years before sidewalks and wider, paved
streets, their dawn-tipped tails and blood-tipped
wings move in choir with the sun, not yet high
enough to dominate the day, but these bandits
of winter, poised here in mid-March still,
call me to stillness, invite me to pause here,
next to the Oak, under their elongated liturgy,
a little longer now, just a little bit longer.