

## CHESAPEAKE BAY: A PROSE POEM ON BIRDWATCHING

I

Snowy egret. Overhead. First spring sighting. A circular flight performed for a mate hidden deep in dead river reeds. I spiral down reed-ward. Nothing above except slate-gray sky.

II

Black-crowned night heron. Dance for me. In your mouth you carry fresh reeds, an offering. When you balance on me, I am cloaked in black feathers, nested in mist. Singing, our notes learn to fly.

III

Red-winged black bird. Bounds off cat-o'-nine tails. My wings flash danger.

IV

Screech owl. Swooping over the nocturned bay. Mice bones crack in my green-black bill. Great horned owl blinks an eye. It is not a cloud-crossed, blood-orange moon.

V

Brook trout. Caught in God's talons. Carried cloud-toward. I tear into blue-swirled scales.

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