Birdsong

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Birdsong

Immersed in a peaceful, snow-cloaked forest
not too far from where Sand Run
pours into the Cuyahoga,
a young woman sits on a
wooden park bench—
tufts of light blond hair
peek out from the gaps between
knit hat and tightly wrapped scarf;
her mittened hands scoop seed
from a zippered sandwich bag,
carefully placing mounds of millet
just far enough away so as not to spook
a brilliant ruby cardinal
flitting from snow-burdened bough
to bench and back again—his
dusty cinnamon beloved
never more than a few hops away.

Outstretched arm held palm-up,
a black-capped chickadee alights on an
index finger—firm grip of tiny feet
barely perceptible—
quickly but calmly selecting the
choicest sunflower seed to
bash open on a nearby branch.

Between feedings, she
reads to her appreciatively
chirping audience from a
leather journal filled with hand-written poetry,
a collection of her most
beautiful words and sounds—
 syllables of human birdsong
hung in the air on visible breath—
offered up as a heartfelt thank you
for the songs they have always sung for her.