

Bird Talk

by Carl Sandburg

And now when the branches were beginning to be heavy,
It was the time when they once had said, "This is the
beginning of summer."

The shrilling of the frogs was not so shrill as in the
5 first weeks after the broken winter;
The birds took their hops and zigzags a little more
anxious; a home is a home; worms are worms.
The yellow spreads of the dandelions and buttercups
reached across the green pastures.
10 *Tee whee* and *tee whee* came on the breezes, and the grackles
chuzzled their syllables.

And it was the leaves with a strong soft wind over them
that talked most of all and said more than any others
though speaking the fewest words.
15 It was the green leaves trickling out the gaunt nowhere
of winter, out on the gray hungry branches—
It was the leaves on the branches, beginning to be heavy,
who said as they said one time before, "This is the be-
ginning of summer."

20 We shall never blame the birds who come
where the river and the road make the Grand Crossing
and talk there, sitting in circles talking bird talk.
If they ask in their circles as to who is here
and as to who is not here and who used to be here,
25 Or if instead of counting up last year as against
this year, they count up this year as against next
year, and have their bird chatter about who is here
this year who won't be here next year,
We shall never blame the birds.

30 If I have put your face among leaf faces, child,
Or if I have put your voice among bird voices,
Blame me no more than the bluejays.

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