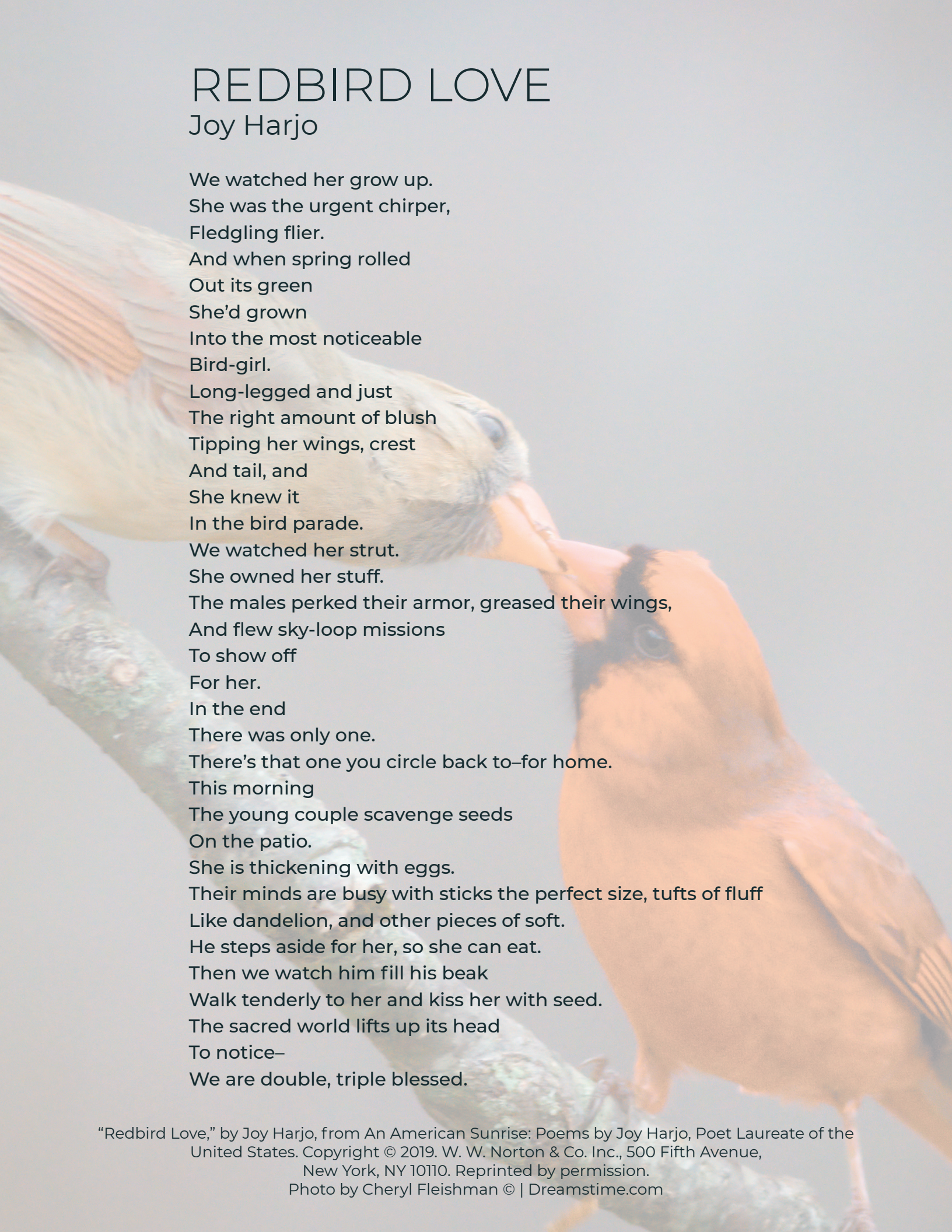


REDBIRD LOVE

Joy Harjo



We watched her grow up.
She was the urgent chirper,
Fledgling flier.
And when spring rolled
Out its green
She'd grown
Into the most noticeable
Bird-girl.
Long-legged and just
The right amount of blush
Tipping her wings, crest
And tail, and
She knew it
In the bird parade.
We watched her strut.
She owned her stuff.
The males perked their armor, greased their wings,
And flew sky-loop missions
To show off
For her.
In the end
There was only one.
There's that one you circle back to—for home.
This morning
The young couple scavenge seeds
On the patio.
She is thickening with eggs.
Their minds are busy with sticks the perfect size, tufts of fluff
Like dandelion, and other pieces of soft.
He steps aside for her, so she can eat.
Then we watch him fill his beak
Walk tenderly to her and kiss her with seed.
The sacred world lifts up its head
To notice—
We are double, triple blessed.