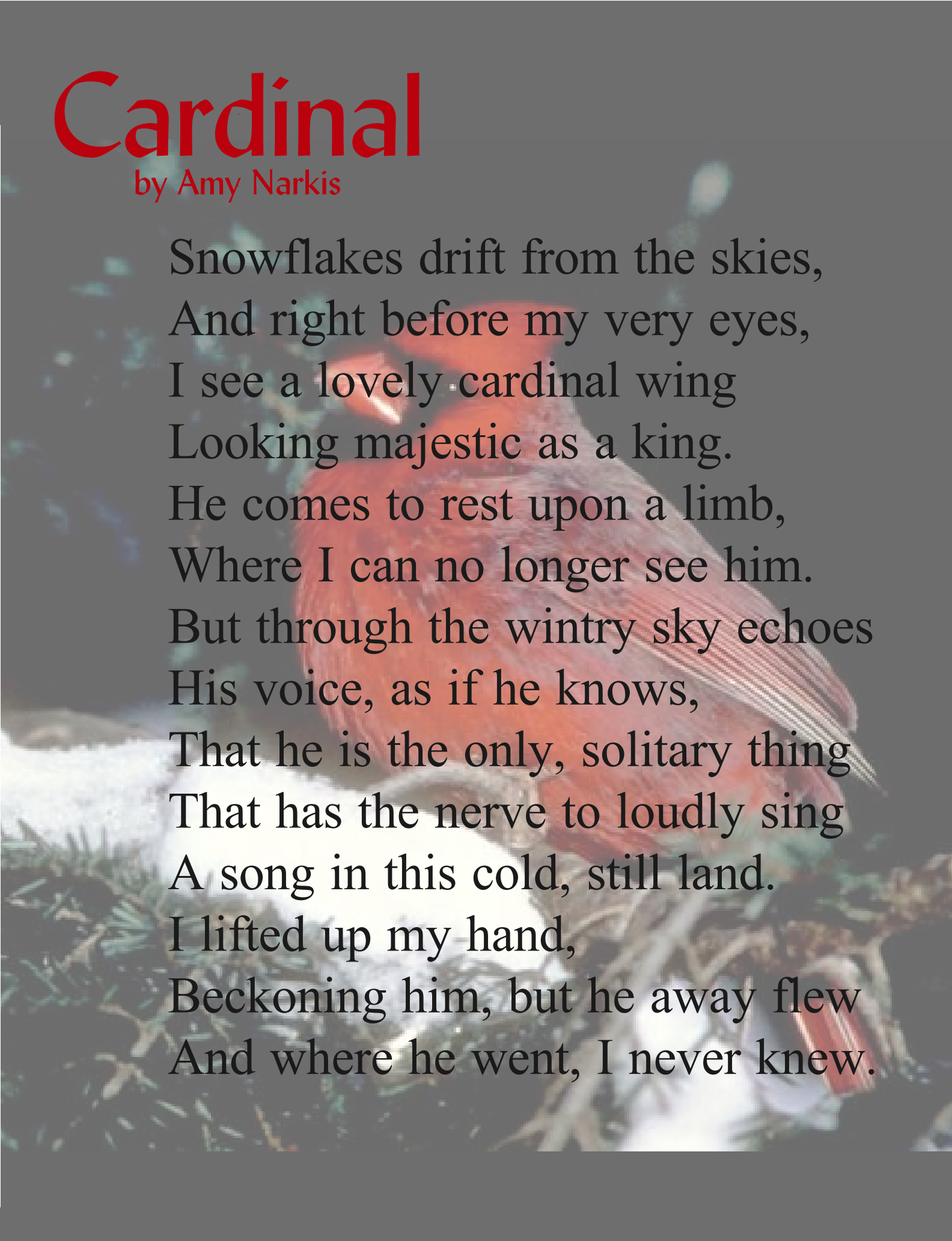


Cardinal

by Amy Narkis

A photograph of a cardinal perched on a branch in a snowy, wintry setting. The cardinal is the central focus, with its vibrant red feathers contrasting against the white snow and dark branches. The background is a soft-focus winter scene with snow-covered evergreen trees.

Snowflakes drift from the skies,
And right before my very eyes,
I see a lovely cardinal wing
Looking majestic as a king.
He comes to rest upon a limb,
Where I can no longer see him.
But through the wintry sky echoes
His voice, as if he knows,
That he is the only, solitary thing
That has the nerve to loudly sing
A song in this cold, still land.
I lifted up my hand,
Beckoning him, but he away flew
And where he went, I never knew.