

Mocking Bird

by Daniel Harris

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There were always mocking birds around my house. I loved to listen to their endless improvisations of found sounds. One year a particularly gifted bird made his nest in the vines growing on my front porch. I spent a pleasant spring day notating his prodigious variations. He had an immense range and sang powerfully.

My girlfriend would whistle to him when she left the house. After the first day, he added a perfect copy of her airy whistle to his repertoire. As happens with girlfriends, she left at Christmas.

By now, it must be two or three generations of mocking birds later, but there are several I hear who still use the ex-girlfriend's airy whistle in their songs. The women come and go, but the song remains.

