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# Pro Rege

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## January Heat

John Van Rys

*Dordt College*

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# January Heat

John Van Rys

The still cold  
of winter morning, a darkness  
brittle with light's memory, a longing  
for green.

The children's park, barren,  
is orange-lit. The cool  
fluorescent glow blackens  
two cottonwoods, their green  
orchestra of leaves absent. Sitting in,

black flames like tongues, tasting air,  
speak gospel truth, a host crackling  
from highest branch tips—

crows throat their knowing,  
guttural caws, their  
short, sharp yawps.