

less, and so on. In the last few days during breeding season, I would just let the birds sit on wires and give needle clumps.

Ornithologists sometimes refer to the winter when all the species go north as winter down for colder, warmer weather. The father had taken her birdwatching when she was just in the grade, and ever since then she had loved taking in the sights of all the colorful and curious birds. In the slight chill of south Florida winter, she could often spot yellow-throated warblers in the crown of palm trees. It was always a delight to see one of them searching for food by hanging upside down on palm fronds, the splash of yellow on black and gray feathers and a ruffled tail clearly indicating what the warbler was. Sometimes she would try to guess if the bird was a lady or a gentleman, but that was hard as females and young males tended to just look like paler versions of the mature male birds.

In the hours of morning birding, the warbler's chest ring out like a delicate necklace, a lovely accent with the threads of sunlight. While Orin was wasn't a stranger to warblers, with palm warblers and American redstarts being common sights around her home, there was something special about the yellow-throated warbler. Perhaps it was in the way it carried itself or its distinct plumage, but either way she was fond of the bird.

She always felt a bit disappointed when spring came rolling back around, knowing that the yellow-throated warblers would once again head north away from the tropical Florida heat. Though it was nice that the rest of the world would be springing back to life in other places where it actually snowed, it was always sad to say goodbye, even just to a simple kind-of-bird. Once winter ended, the birds would move up to states like Georgia and Kentucky, and she would have to travel to see them.

But though it wasn't all that bad, the yellow-throated warbler was still a southerner: her species and there was a permanent population in northern Florida.