

Belle of the Ball (to a Waxwing)

What Nordic witchcraft has created
your silky charms,
black-masked as if off to the ball?
Are you as garrulous as your name implies?

Bombycilla garrulous, a social bird for sure
your flocks bedeck the Rowan tree
to banquet on fermented berries red
until – quite tipsy - some keel over.

What alchemist dipped a brush
into vats of molten wax and tipped
your wings with red and white and yellow,
beauty sealed forever?

A master *coiffeuse* designed your crest,
more glamorous than a duck's arse quiff
or Mohican style, and dusted it with
powdered carmine to get you ready for the ball.

No wallflower you!
Some satineer has glossed your feathers
to a silken weave and fashioned
you a velvet ballgown of pinky buff.

I long to hear your tinkling trill
as you fly-dance the Mountain Ash
and when the feast has been devoured
you flit to another fruit-laden bower.

'Museum of Waxwings' your collective noun
- to watch you settle on a berry tree
is quite enough display for me.

by Eithne Cavanagh © 2014