

A Bird of Prey

by [Michael Shindler](#) (August 2021)



Hawk on a Pine, Kano Yukinobu, Muromachi period

A bird of prey in morning light
Gliding desolate lengths
Of grey-blue middle-sky
With great wings upright
And wind-borne strengths
Glinting from its sunward eye:

It stretches its body against the sun
Forcing its pointed face into shadow,
Its beguiling gaze turned below
To what is to be won.

And there the changeable sweep
Of earth in its magnitudes
Juts from the black
Reaches of the unfathoming deep
In all its varying attitudes,
Like an amnesiac.

The great god-bird dives,
Its shadow chasing towards it:
Thus some live their lives,
Traversing their ambit.

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New English Review, University Bookman, and Providence. Follow him on Twitter