

# 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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