

*Macbeth* by William Shakespeare (2.4.2-26)

OLD MAN

I have seen  
Hours dreadful and things strange, but this score night  
Hath trifled former knowings.

ROSS

Ha, good father,  
Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with man's act,  
Threatens his bloody stage. By th'clock 'tis day,  
**And yet dark night strangles the traveling lamp.**  
Is't night's predominance or the day's shame  
That darkness does the face of earth entomb  
When living light should kiss it?

OLD MAN

'Tis unnatural,  
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last  
**A falcon, tow'ring in her pride of place,  
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.**

ROSS

And Duncan's **horses** (a thing most strange and certain).  
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,  
**Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,  
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would  
Make war with Mankind.**

OLD MAN

**"Tis said they eat each other.**

ROSS

They did so, to th' amazement of mine eyes  
That looked upon't.

*Mama Day* by Gloria Naylor (p. 100)

The stench was overpowering. I couldn't breathe in that raw manure without wanting to gag. I rushed back out into the fresh air, but with nothing in my stomach, I brought up only a mild aftertaste of ginger and honey. The second attempt was better. I took shallow breaths, which helped me to bear the smell. **The light was so dim**, how would I be able to find a red hen? There was only row after row of yellow eyes, glinting at me from all sides. ***The Northwest corner of the coop.*** North would be to my right, west straight in front of me. It was the only next in that corner, a low pine box filled with straw. The **huge red hen seemed to be in a trance**; she sat there immobile until I came within two feet of her. **The feathers around her neck began to swell as she emitted a deep throaty hiss, followed by a garbled set of short sounds, her throat vibrating. Her eyes never left me. And when I came within another foot, she struck.**

She flew at my legs. I pushed her aside, and tried to reach behind the nest. Too low - I would have to get farther down. A sharp pain seared through my ankle where she was ripping through the denim with her beak. Kicking backward, I heard a high shriek, and the whole place exploded in rumbles and cackling. Quickly falling down on my bruised knees, gritting my teeth against the pain that radiated through my temples, I wedged my hands behind the next. A blur of red feathers, **she sank her claws into my wrist and a beak like rapid gunfire began tearing at my left hand.** I ripped my skin trying to get her claws out of me before flinging her on her back. I turned the whole nest over, eggs bursting and splattering into the straw. Another shriek. She came at the side of my face. I raised my right hand to protect my eyes; blood spurted from a pierced vein. I threw her again and hurriedly dug at the loose straw and manure in the corner. **Nothing.**

*Macbeth* by William Shakespeare (2.2.58-86)

LENNOX

The night has been unruly. Where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down and, as they say,  
Lamentings heard i' th' air strange screams of death,  
And prophesying, with accents terrible,  
Of dire combustion and confused events  
New hatched to th' woeful time. The obscure bird  
Clamoured the livelong night. Some say the earth  
Was feverous and did shake.

MACBETH

T'was a rough night.

LENNOX

My young remembrance cannot parallel  
A fellow to it.

*Enter Macduff*

MACDUFF

O horror, horror, horror!

Tongue nor heart cannot conceive nor name thee!

MACBETH AND LENNOX

What's the matter?

MACDUFF

Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.  
Most sciliegious murder hath broke ope  
The Lord's anointed temple and stole thence  
The life i' th' building.

MACBETH

What is it you say? The Life?

*Salvage the Bones* by Jesmyn Ward (pages 230-231)

It is terrible. It is the flailing wind that lashes like an extension cord used as a beating belt. It is the rain, which stings like stones, which drives into our eyes and bids them shut. It is the water, swirling and gathering and spreading on all sides, brown with an undercurrent of red to it, the clay of the Pit like a cut that won't stop leaking. It is the remains of the yard, the refrigerators and lawn mowers and the RV and mattresses, floating like a fleet. It is trees and branches breaking, popping like Black Cat firecrackers in an endless crackle of explosions, over and over and again and again. It is us huddling together on the roof, me with the wire of the bucket handle looped over my shoulder, shaking against the plastic. It is everywhere. Daddy kneels behind us, tries to gather all of us to him. Skeetah hugs China, and she howls, Daddy's truck careens slowly in the yard.

Skeetah is hunched over, picking at his jeans. He takes off his pants, tries to hold them still in front of him; the legs whip in the wind. He shoves China's back legs into the crotch, and then he flings one pant leg over his shoulder and the other he tucks under his underarm.

"Tie it!" Skeetah yells.

I tie it in a knot. My fingers are stiff and numb. I pull the wet fabric as hard as I can, test it. China's head and legs are smashed to his chest, pinned under the fabric. She is his baby in a sling, and she is shaking.

"Look!" Skeet says and points. I follow his finger to the hollow carcass of Mother Lizbeth and Papa Joseph's house. The top half and the eaves of the house are above water. It's on a hill!" Skeetah screams.

"How are going to get there?" Randall yells.

*Macbeth* by William Shakespeare (2.2.18-44)

LADY MACBETH  
My husband?

MACBETH  
I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH  
I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.  
Did you not speak?

MACBETH                   When?

LADY MACBETH                   Now.

MACBETH                                   As I descended?

LADY MACBETH                                   Ay.

MACBETH   Hark! Who lies i' th' second chamber?

LADY MACBETH   Donalbain

MACBETH   This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH  
A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH  
There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried "Murder!"  
That they did wake each other. I stood and heard them.  
But they did say their prayers and addressed them  
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH   There are two lodged together.

MACBETH  
One cried "God bless us" and "Amen" the other,  
List'ning their fear. I could not say "Amen"  
When they did say "God bless us."

LADY MACBETH   Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH  
But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?  
I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"  
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH   These deeds must not be thought  
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

*Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes (pages 76-77)

Alejo had not guessed the biplane was so close until its gray shadow crossed over him like a crucifix, and he ducked into the leaves. The biplane circled, banking steeply over the trees and then released the shower of white pesticide.

-What the ...? They're spraying! But Alejo couldn't hear Gumecindo's response because the drone of the motor like the snapping of rubber bands drowned out his words.

- Run! Alejo screamed, struggling to get himself down from the tree, Get the fuck outta here!

Gumecindo dropped the sacks and ran, jumping over irrigation pumps, crunching the flesh of rotting peaches, running just ahead of the cross shadow.

Alejo slid through the bushy branches, the tangled twigs scratching his face, and he was ready to jump when he felt the mist. He shut his eyes tight to the mist of black afternoon. At first it was just a slight moisture until the poison rolled down his face in deep sticky streaks. The lingering smell was a scent of ocean salt and beached kelp until he inhaled again and could detect under the innocence the heavy chemical choke of poison. Air clogged in his lungs and he thought he was just holding his breath, until he tried exhaling but couldn't, which meant he couldn't breathe. He panicked when he realized he was choking, clamped his neck with one hand, feeling his Adam's apple against his palm, but still held onto a branch tightly with the other, afraid he would fall long and hard, like the insects did. He swallowed finally and the spit in his throat felt like balls of scratchy sand. Was this punishment for his thievery? He was sorry Lod, so sorry.

