

Training the Beast to Fly

Everywhere I go I am stopped by children
Who ask me why I clothe myself with feathers.
I clothe myself for you I tell them,
So you might flock from the village
To see the impossible sight I make
Winging from stone to spire
In this maze of craggy bluffs.

I am the birdman come to teach you
The rudiments of flying.
Come, and I shall take you
Cartwheeling across the wide terrain.
I shall teach you about the currents
That shape the flesh in gainly flight.
Come, come away with me. Defy the gravity
Bestowed on you before your birth.

Chase with me across the latitudes.
Etch deep and lasting furrows
In slopes of the transparent field.
Here, let me show you how to tilt your arms.
Let me show you how to don the plumage
That will make you foreign to the ones
You sleep beside among the heavy treaders.

ERNEST HEKKANEN