

**THE GOSHAWK**

**T. H. WHITE**

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**INTRODUCTION BY  
MARIE WINN**

TERENCE HANBURY WHITE (1906–1964) was born in Bombay, India, and educated at Queen's College, Cambridge. His childhood was unhappy—"my parents loathed each other," he later wrote—and he grew up to become a solitary person with a deep fund of strange lore and a tremendous enthusiasm for fishing, hunting, and flying (which he took up to overcome his fear of heights). White taught for some years at the Stowe School until the success in 1936 of *England Have My Bones*, a book about outdoor adventure, allowed him to quit teaching and become a full-time writer. Along with *The Goshawk*, White was the author of twenty-six published works, including his famed sequence of Arthurian novels, *The Once and Future King*; the fantasy *Mistress Masham's Repose* (published in The New York Review of Books Children's Collection); a collection of essays on the eighteenth century, *The Age of Scandal*; and a translation of a medieval Latin bestiary, *A Book of Beasts*. He died at sea on his way home from an American lecture tour and is buried in Piraeus, Greece.

MARIE WINN's recent book, *Red-Tails in Love: Pale Male's Story*, featured a now-famous red-tailed hawk. Her column on nature and bird-watching appeared for twelve years in *The Wall Street Journal*, and she has written on diverse subjects for *The New York Times Magazine* and *Smithsonian*. Her forthcoming book, *Central Park in the Dark*, will be published in the spring of 2008.



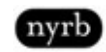
# THE GOSHAWK

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T. H. WHITE

*Introduction by*  
**MARIE WINN**

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# INTRODUCTION

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What an uncommon man was Terence Hanbury White, known to his few friends as Tim and to the rest of the world as T. H. A polymath and polyglot; a misanthrope who made exceptions for the very young, the very old, and the severely blighted; a nature lover inspired by his distinguished namesake of Selborne yet who blithely snagged salmon and shot geese, he was a superb writer though an indifferent speller, an unhappy man with a knack for making readers happy. He kept snakes, fox cubs, owls, frogs, and badgers in his sitting room at the Stowe School, an Eton-type boys' school in Buckinghamshire where he taught English from 1932 to 1936. For his impressionable students, White's Kiplingesque background provided an exotic aura: a miserable childhood in colonial Bombay then four years at Cheltenham, a Dickensian boarding school where boys were regularly flogged by sadistic schoolmasters—White himself had a sadomasochistic streak, perhaps in consequence. His precocious literary accomplishments—two volumes of poetry came out while he was still an undergraduate at Cambridge and two novels shortly thereafter—gave him the undeniable glamour of a published author. “He had an open black Bentley and a red setter and among the boys enjoyed a reputation exciting, faintly discreditable and much envied,” a former student told Sylvia Townsend Warner, White's biographer. A “daemoniac and brilliant man,” according to his obituary in a Stowe publication.

The red setter, Brownie, was the great love of White's life, a romance reminiscent of the one described by his contemporary J. R. Ackerley in *My Dog Tulip*. T. H. White never wrote about his own beloved dog, apart from letters to friends and one touching document written for a seven-year-old godson. In the summer of 1936, however, he began to document another extra-human infatuation that possessed him briefly but entirely. This time the object of White's passion was a bird, a fledgling goshawk. The young man intended to learn the ancient practice of falconry and a male goshawk, or tiercel, in falconer's parlance, was the bird he chose to hunt with. *The Goshawk* is the book White wrote about his struggles “to train a person who was not human.” It is also a book about the bird's efforts to train the man.

The goshawk arrived at the Buckingham railroad station on July 31, huddled in a clothes basket covered with sacking, terrified, bedraggled, and mad as hell. “It would have eaten anybody alive,” White wrote. Three months earlier, when his well-received collection of writings about hunting, fishing, and country life, *England Have My Bones*, attracted several book club deals, White had the intoxicating idea of quitting his job at Stowe and making a go of it as a full-time writer. Teaching did not suit him, he had begun to discover, and the solitary, solipsistic life of a writer did. “I'm beginning to find there is something horrible about boys in the mass: like haddock,” he wrote to L. J. Potts, his former Cambridge tutor and a lifelong correspondent. White resigned his job at the end of the term and rented a primitive gamekeeper's cottage—it only had a well and an outhouse—deep in the woods of the Stowe estate. It was half a mile from any road and seven miles from the nearest town, a perfect place for a would-be recluse, albeit a sybaritic one: using his book club money, White furnished it with pile carpets, curtains, and antique furniture. *The Goshawk* was the first of two masterpieces he wrote there.

Later he described how the book came to be:

I had two books on the training of the falconidae in one of which was a sentence that suddenly struck me like fire from my mind. The sentence was: “She suddenly reverted to a feral state.” A longing came to my mind that I should be able to do this myself. The word “feral” has a kind of magic potency which allied itself to two other words, “ferocious” and “free.” To revert to a feral state! I took a farm-labourer's cottage and wrote to Germany for a goshawk.

White is more candid in the first chapter of the book itself: “I had to write a book of some sort, for I only had a hundred pounds in the world and my keeper’s cottage cost me five shillings a week. It seemed best to write about what I was interested in.” A less romantic version than the first, but it supports Dr. Johnson’s pronouncement that the want of money “is the only motive to writing that I know of.”

Falconry is a supremely difficult sport and White yearned for challenges. Among his other chosen pursuits in addition to a steady production of books were fly-fishing, duck hunting, fast driving, airplane piloting, calligraphy, translating medieval texts from Latin, bouts of marathon drinking, bouts of abstinence, and, briefly, psychoanalysis, the last undertaken in a misguided effort to reverse his homosexuality. It was the heartbreaking conviction of the time that the “talking cure” could transform a gay man into a happy heterosexual husband and father; White briefly craved both roles. Though the immediate goal was doomed to failure, he enjoyed the intellectual challenge of analysis; his thinking and writing were colored by insights gained during his sessions on the couch.

Falconry, the struggle of man against wild bird, seemed a natural outlet for White’s strong aggressive instincts, the ones he utilized in his pursuit of blood sports. And for someone afflicted with deep self-loathing—a likely consequence of a childhood spent at the mercy of a weak-willed, alcoholic father and a willful, self-centered, alternately seductive and rejecting mother—here was an opportunity to ally himself with a creature even more unpleasant, uncontrolled, and aggressive than he was. By taming it he may have hoped to subdue his own wild, antisocial impulses. And yet White’s longing for ferocity and freedom had brought him to falconry in the first place. He recognized the contradictions inherent in his desire to be “free as a hawk” while keeping a wild hawk tethered to a perch, obliged to perform on demand. His ambivalence about these warring impulses is manifest throughout *The Goshawk*.

He called the bird Gos, though he resorted to other names as well: Caligula, insane assassin, accursed overlord, filthy bugger, and choleric beast among them. The bird drove him to distraction. For unlike most falconry beginners who start with a bird that is relatively easy to train, a red-tailed hawk, for example, White had taken on the hardest, most intransigent, most ornery of all birds of prey. Goshawks have always been highly regarded in falconry because of their superlative hunting skills. But every falconer knows they are devilishly hard to train. From the start of his adventure with Gos, White understood that he had taken on the most difficult task of his difficulty-craving life—one, indeed, that might prove *too* difficult.

White compounded his difficulties by using an outdated textbook as his vade mecum, *Bert’s Treatise of Hawks and Hunting*. Printed in 1619, *Bert’s* required that the training process start with a lengthy period of “watching”—that is, holding the newly acquired hawk on outstretched hand day and night, without a moment’s relief for either man or hawk, until the bird finally falls asleep on its human perch. Only then, when trust is established, can real training begin. White’s watching stint with Gos required three uninterrupted days and nights, an ordeal he describes with breath-taking immediacy in *The Goshawk*. At the time he didn’t know that modern falconers had developed a streamlined training method that would have made the task much easier. But of course the story would have been less compelling. Almost certainly White’s book would have had a different ending.

The power of *The Goshawk* lies in the struggle for control and self-control that is ever present in the text, with the struggle for self-mastery the more poignant one. White knew that he had to be gentle and reassuring during his training sessions with Gos, for a hawk cannot be forced to submit to his master’s will. The captive bird, through an odd form of transference, must come to believe that the falconer is his savior. “In a way it is the psychiatrist’s art,” White wrote, making the comparison between falconry and psychotherapy explicit. Yet time and again the inevitable battle of wills between

man and bird made the man lose his cool. The bird, of course, was almost never cool. He was likely to express his fury by going into a “bate,” an old falconry term describing, as White puts it, “the headlong dive of rage and terror by which a leashed hawk leaps from the fist in a wild bid for freedom and hangs upside down by his jesses in a flurry of pinions like a chicken being decapitated.” After the thousandth bate, White writes, it was agonizing to be calm and patient, to speak to the hawk kindly:

[T]o reassure with tranquility when one yearned to beat him down—with a mad surge of blood to the temples to pound, pash,<sup>[1]</sup> dismember, wring, wrench, pluck, cast about in all directions, batter, bash, tug and stamp on, utterly to punish, and obliterate, have done with, and finally finish this dolt, cow, maniac, unutterable, unsupportable Gos.

Bear in mind that White is having this verbal temper tantrum as he’s balancing a notebook on his right knee and jotting down what’s going on, while holding the hawk upright on his left fist with the arm bent into an L-shape, aching under the weight of the bird. The mounting fury and yet the affection that emanates from his stream of invective rings a bell to anyone who has experienced the pleasure and pain of raising a difficult but beloved two-year-old. It is an uncanny part of the writer’s skill that the diatribe he is uttering sounds like an unmistakable love song.

But as the end of his adventure with Gos approached, something unexpected happened that made White change the plan for his book. (I will not spoil the story by telling you what it was.) And though White continued writing for a while—the book was almost finished—it was with half a heart. Finally he tucked the manuscript away somewhere and began writing another book, one in which his goshawk experiences would appear in a different form. That second book was *The Sword in the Stone*, T. H. White’s tale for all ages about the childhood of King Arthur—a hunting expedition with a goshawk is in the first scene. The first of a trilogy of books based on Malory’s *Morte d’Arthur*, it was published in 1938. *The Goshawk* didn’t find its way into print until 1951. In a postscript written before its belated publication, White explained why he had decided to put the book aside thirteen years earlier. But he chose not to reveal the improbable behind-the-scenes story of how it finally came to be published.

It happened in 1949 on the island Alderney, the third largest of the Channel Islands. White had moved there three years earlier, not coincidentally because it was a tax haven and his career was prospering. As Sylvia Townsend Warner related:

[W]hen Wren Howard of Jonathan Cape visited him in March, 1949, they immediately liked each other. During this visit Howard, finding himself incommoded by a bulky object beneath a settee cushion, abstracted it. It was the typescript of *The Goshawk*. He read it in bed and insisted on taking it back with him next day in spite of White’s vehement resistance.

Shortly thereafter Howard wrote from London that Cape wanted to publish the book. “[I]t’s so good that it certainly must be printed,” he declared.

At first White refused to allow *The Goshawk* to be published. In a return letter to Howard he wrote:

My shyness about it is personal. You see, apart from not wanting to spread one’s personality naked before the public, I have become a much better falconer since then—even an authority on the matter. I know just how bad the falconry in that book is, if I recollect it. It is like asking a grown-up to sanction the publication of his adolescent diaries ...

But White had qualified his refusal by saying, “If Bunny says that the Hawk book is really good, I will



consent to publishing it. I have not read it since I wrote it, long before the war.”

Bunny was ~~White's friend David Garnett, a notable critic and novelist of the time, who responded~~ by sending a written opinion of the book to its would-be publisher:

I think this is really Tim's best book—an opinion which is perhaps not very flattering when analyzed. For Tim is not a lover of humanity or human beings and when he writes he usually writes partly for them, and the wish to please is a pretence. Here he lapses occasionally into awareness of other people and is writing privately. He is therefore more exact, more honest, more interesting. The battle between Tim and Gos is a masterpiece.

White's fear of being scorned by the falconry world was rooted in some reality. Many who practice the arcane sport today look down on *The Goshawk* as a period piece. I asked my only acquaintance in the falconry world what he thought of White's book. An Ohio biologist who hunts with a red-tailed hawk, John Blakeman wrote that he hadn't actually read it. But he added, “Since the book's publication a great deal has been learned about how to train and hunt this species (the goshawk). I seriously doubt the falconry community will be interested.”

White had anticipated such a response from “real” falconers. “What right had a cowardly recluse who fled from his fellow men ... to write about these fabulous creatures?” he imagined they'd say about his book. He had his defense ready: “[M]ine was not a falconer's book at all. It would be a learner's book only; in the last resort, a writer's book, by one who might have tried in vain to be a falconer.”

When Cape continued to press publication, White wrote: “I am heartbroken that you want to publish it.” Nevertheless, in the same letter he offered to help by providing pictures for the book if they were needed. After that, no one worried much about the broken heart.

When I first read *The Goshawk* I pronounced it “gosh hawk,” having never heard the word spoken out loud. Many years later I became a bird-watcher, and one winter a huge *Accipiter gentilis* paid a rare visit to Central Park. That bird was a female, and therefore it was considerably bigger than T. H. White's antagonist. Female hawks and falcons are almost always substantially bigger than males. Listening to my fellow bird-watchers that day I learned that the first syllable of the word rhymes with “Las” as in Las Vegas, not with “wash.” By calling his hawk Gos, White had given his readers a clue to pronunciation I hadn't caught.

My previous literary goshawk was the one in *The Sword in the Stone*, once a cult book for a subset of adolescents still clinging to childhood but finding Winnie-the-Pooh a bit precious. So, it appears, did T. H. White. He wrote to L. J. Potts just before *The Sword in the Stone* was published, “What I fear is that it has feeble traces of A. A. Milne.” The traces are feeble indeed, as White knew well—his writing has little of the sentimentality or nostalgia of Milne's Pooh books. “I think it's one of my better books,” he continued, adding bitterly: “so probably nobody else will.” White was right on the first count and wrong on the second. The book was taken on by the American Book-of-the-Month Club, ensuring a sale of 150,000 copies. Even though he immediately bought a Jaguar (the sports car, not the beast), his chances at continuing life as a starving artist were now effectively ruined.

*The Sword in the Stone* was subsequently made into a full-length Walt Disney cartoon and finally, in 1958, it was incorporated into *The Once and Future King*. Composed of all White's previously published Arthurian tales which were especially re-edited for this edition (to the original book's considerable disadvantage, in the case of *The Sword in the Stone*), the compendium became a best seller and a few years later was bought by Lerner and Lowe as the basis of their hugely successful Broadway musical *Camelot*. Years after White's death the book's influence continued in a way that

would have staggered its author. J. K. Rowling revealed to an interviewer that the boy named Wart, whose education as the future King Arthur is described in *The Sword in the Stone*, was Harry Potter's "spiritual ancestor." Indeed, the parallels between White's fantasy/adventure/school story and the Harry Potter opus are many.

In spite of T. H. White's once and future successes, his warning in an early chapter of *The Goshawk* proved prescient. There he had idly noted, perhaps to forestall its eventuality, "the folly of thinking that anybody would want to buy a book about mere birds." In the end it was far more than a bird story, including among its gifts to readers a history and description of medieval hawk management, an incisive dissertation on Shakespeare's use of falconry (especially in *The Taming of the Shrew*) and much natural history observation that goes beyond the ornithological (my favorite was about maggots). Nevertheless, in 1951 White's book may have appeared to be a mere bird book to prospective buyers. It enjoyed only modest sales and then went out of print.

Over the years, however, *The Goshawk*'s underground reputation grew. Like the great books of Joseph Mitchell that were unavailable for decades until a canny publisher obtained the author's permission (after years of resistance) and republished them in a single volume, T. H. White's hawk story accumulated a passionate coterie of devotees that continued to grow long after its author's death. When library copies were lost or stolen, and several brief paperback reprints did not go back to press, the book became available only to readers willing to pay high prices at antiquarian bookstores or, in recent years, used-book sites on the Internet. Now, to our good fortune, everyone can read it.

In all works of art, larger meanings attach to the particular stories they tell. So too in this book. For parents, for married couples, for partners of all sorts, even for nations, *The Goshawk* will provoke thoughts about the inevitable power struggles of human relations. For writers especially, this simple story about a man training a hawk provides a model for a less self-pitying approach to life. Instead of regretting the hours they must spend at their labors, obliged, as Milton wrote, "to scorn delights and live laborious days," all who slave at their art might choose to take an alternate view, one White conceived during his arduous days and nights with Gos: Why not "live laborious days for their delights?" he inquires. Though his story was one of unending labor and almost unendurable frustration, White's joy in the process allowed him to create an occasion of delight for his readers.

—MARIE WIN

[1]The word "pash" appears in modern dictionaries only as a slang abbreviation for the noun passion but it can be found in the appropriate sense in the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "To hurl or throw [something] violently so as to either break it against something or smash something with it." Pash as verb fell into obsolescence before the end of the seventeenth century. White may have come across it in *Piers Ploughman*, a fourteenth-century book he surely read which contains the line cited in the *OED*: "I'll pash him o'er the face."



*Attilae Hunnorum Regi hominum truculentissimo, qui flagellum Dei dictus fuit, ita placuit Astur, ut in  
insigni, galea, & pileo eum coronatum gestaret.*

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ALDROVANDU



*Tuesday*

WHEN I first saw him he was a round thing like a clothes basket covered with sacking. But he was tumultuous and frightening, repulsive in the same way as snakes are frightening to people who do not know them, or dangerous as the sudden movement of a toad by the door step when one goes out at night with a lantern into the dew. The sacking had been sewn with string, and he was bumping against it from underneath: bump, bump, bump, incessantly, with more than a hint of lunacy. The basket pulsed like a big heart in fever. It gave out weird cries of protest, hysterical, terrified, but furious and authoritative. It would have eaten anybody alive.

Imagine what his life had been till then. When he was an infant, still unable to fly and untidy with bits of fluff, still that kind of mottled, motive and gaping toad which confronts us when we look into birds' nests in May: when, moreover, he was a citizen of Germany, so far away: a glaring man had come to his mother's nest with a basket like this one, and had stuffed him in. He had never seen a human being, never been confined in such a box, which smelled of darkness and manufacture and the stink of man. It must have been like death—the thing which we can never know beforehand—as, with clumsy talons groping for an unnatural foothold, his fledgeling consciousness was hunched and bundled in the oblong, alien surroundingness. The guttural voices, the unbirdlike den he was taken to, the scaly hands which bound him, the second basket, the smell and noise of the motor car, the unbearable, measured clamour of the aircraft which bounced those skidding talons on the untrustworthy woven floor all the way to England: heat, fear, noise, hunger, the reverse of nature: with these to stomach, terrified, but still nobly and madly defiant, the eyas goshawk had arrived at my small cottage in his accursed basket—a wild and adolescent creature whose father and mother in eagles' nests had fed him with bloody meat still quivering with life, a foreigner from far black pine slopes, where a bundle of precipitous sticks and some white droppings, with a few bones and feathers splashed over the tree foot, had been to him the ancestral heritage. He was born to fly, sloping sideways, free among the verdure of that Teutonic upland, to murder with his fierce feet and to consume with that curved Persian beak, who now hopped up and down in the clothes basket with a kind of imperious precocity, the impatience of a spoiled but noble heir apparent to the Holy Roman Empire.

I picked up the clothes basket in a gingerly way and carried it to the barn. The workman's cottage which I lived in had been built under Queen Victoria, with barn and pigsty and bakehouse, and it had once been inhabited by a gamekeeper. There in the wood, long ago when Englishmen lived their own sports, instead of competing at games with tedious abstract tennis bats and cricket sticks and golfing mallets as they do today, the keeper who lived in the cottage had reared his pheasants. There was no wire netting in his days, and the windows of the low barn were enclosed with wooden slats, nailed criss-cross, a diamond lattice work. I put Gos down in the barn, in his basket, and was splitting a rabbit's head to get at the brain, when two friends whose sad employment I had lately followed came to take me to a public house for the last time. The hawk came out of the basket already strong on the wing, beat up to the rafters, while his master, armed with two pairs of leather gloves on each hand, cowered near the floor—and then there was no more time. I had intended to put a pair of jesses on him at once, but he flew up before I had pulled myself together: and it was only when the great bundle of young feathers was perching on the rafters that one could see the jesses already on him. Jesses were what they called the thongs about his feet. Jessed but not belled, perched at the top of the old gamekeeper's loft, baleful and extraordinary, I left the goshawk to settle down: while we three went

out to the public house for a kind of last supper, at which none was more impatient of translation than the departing guest.

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They brought me back at about eleven o'clock, and by midnight I had given them drink and wished them fortune. They were good people, so far as their race went, for they were among the few in it who had warm hearts, but I was glad to see them go: glad to shake off with them the last of an old human life, and to turn to the cobwebby outhouse where Gos and a new destiny sat together in contrary arrogance.

The hawk was on the highest rafter, out of reach, looking down with his head on one side and a faint suggestion of Lars Porsena. Humanity could not get there.

Fortunately my human manoeuvres disturbed the creature, shook him off the high perch to which he was entitled by nature and unused by practice — unused by the practice which had stormed at him with mechanical noises and shaken him with industrial jolts and bent his tail feathers into a parody of a Woolworth mop.

He flew, stupid with too many experiences, off the perch at which he would have been impregnable. There was sorrow in the inapt evasion. A goshawk, too gigantic for a British species, and only three inches shorter than the golden eagle, was not meant to run away but to run after. The result was that now in this confinement of unknown brick walls, he fled gauchely, round and about the dreary room: until he was caught after a few circuits by the jesses, and I stood, stupefied at such temerity, with the monster on my fist.

## Night

The yellowish breast-feathers — Naples Yellow — were streaked downward with long, arrow-shaped hackles of Burnt Umber: his talons, like scimitars, clutched the leather glove on which he stood with convulsive grip: for an instant he stared upon me with a mad, marigold or dandelion eye, all his plumage flat to the body and his head crouched like a snake's in fear or hatred, then bated wildly from the fist.

Bated. They still said that Jones minor got into a bate that morning, at preparatory schools. It was a word that had been used since falcons were first flown in England, since England was first a country, therefore. It meant the headlong dive of rage and terror, by which a leashed hawk leaps from the fist: a wild bid for freedom, and hangs upside down by his jesses in a flurry of pinions like a chicken being decapitated, revolving, struggling, in danger of damaging his primaries.

It was the falconer's duty to lift the hawk back to the fist with his other hand in gentleness and patience, only to have him bate again, once, twice, twenty, fifty times, all night — in the shadowy, midnight barn, by the light of the second-hand paraffin lamp.

It was two years ago.<sup>[1]</sup> I had never trained a serious hawk before, nor met a living falconer, nor seen a hawk that had been trained. I had three books. One of them was by Gilbert Blaine, the second was a half-volume in the Badminton Library and the third was Bert's *Treatise of Hawks and Hawking*, which had been printed in 1619. From these I had a theoretical idea, and a very out-of-date idea, of the way to man a hawk.

In teaching a hawk it was useless to bludgeon the creature into submission. The raptors had no tradition of masochism, and the more one menaced or tortured them, the more they menaced in return. Wild and intransigent, it was yet necessary to 'break' them somehow or other, before they could be

tamed and taught. Any cruelty, being immediately resented, was worse than useless, because the bird would never bend or break to it. He possessed the last inviolable sanctuary of death. The mishandled raptor chose to die.

So the old hawk-masters had invented a means of taming them which offered no visible cruelty, and whose secret cruelty had to be born by the trainer as well as by the bird. They kept the bird awake. Not by nudging it, or by any mechanical means, but by walking about with their pupil on the fist and staying awake themselves. The hawk was 'watched', was deprived of sleep by a sleepless man, day and night, for a space of two, three or as much as nine nights together. It was only the stupid teachers who could go as far as nine nights: the genius could do with two, and the average man with three. All the time he treated his captive with more than every courtesy, more than every kindness and consideration. The captive did not know that it was being kept awake by an act of will, but only that it was awake, and in the end, becoming too sleepy to mind what happened, it would droop its head and wings and go to sleep on the fist. It would say: 'I am so tired that I will accept this curious perch, repose my trust in this curious creature, anything so I may rest.'

This was what I was now setting out to do. I was to stay awake if necessary for three days and nights, during which, I hoped, the tyrant would learn to stop his bating and to accept my hand as a perch, would consent to eat there and would become a little accustomed to the strange life of human beings.

In this there was much interest and joy — the joy of the discoverer — much to think about, and very much to observe. It meant walking round and round in the lamplight, constantly lifting back the sufferer, with a gentle hand under his breast, after the hundredth bate: it meant humming to oneself un-tunefully, talking to the hawk, stroking his talons with a feather when he did consent to stay on the glove: it meant reciting Shakespeare to keep awake, and thinking with pride and happiness about the hawk's tradition.

Falconry was perhaps the oldest sport persisting in the world. There was a bas-relief of a Babylonian with a hawk on his fist in Khorsabad, which dated from 3000 years ago. Many people were not able to understand why this was pleasant, but it was. I thought it was right that I should now be happy to continue as one of a long line. The unconscious of the race was a medium in which one's own unconscious microscopically swam, and not only in that of the living race but of all the races which had gone before. The Assyrian had begotten children. I grasped that ancestor's bony hand, in which all the knuckles were as well defined as the nutty calf of his bas-relief leg, across the centuries.

Hawks were the nobility of the air, ruled by the eagle. They were the only creatures for which man had troubled to legislate. We still passed laws which preserved certain birds or made certain ways of taking them illegal, but we never troubled to lay down rules for the birds themselves. We did not say that a pheasant must only belong to a civil servant or a partridge to an inspector-of-filling-up-forms. But in the old days, when to understand the manage of a falcon was the criterion by which a gentleman could be recognized — and in those days a gentleman was a defined term, so that to be proclaimed 'noe gent.' by a college of arms was equivalent to being proclaimed no airman by the Royal Aero Club or no motorist by the licensing authorities—the *Boke of St. Albans* had laid down precisely the classes of people to whom any proper-minded member of the Falconidae might belong. An eagle for an emperor, a peregrine for an earl: the list had defined itself meticulously downward to the kestrel, and he, as a crowning insult, was allowed to belong to a mere knave — because he was useless to be trained. Well, a goshawk was the proper servant for a yeoman, and I was well content with that.

There were two kinds of these raptors, the long- and the short-winged hawks. Long-winged hawks, whose first primary feather was on the whole the longest, were the 'falcons', who were attended by falconers. Short-winged hawks, whose fourth primary was the longest, were the true 'hawks', who were attended by austringers. Falcons flew high and stooped upon their quarry: hawks flew low, and



slew by stealth. Gos was a chieftain among the latter.

But it was his own personality that gave more pleasure than his lineage. He had a way of looking. Cats can watch a mousehole cruelly, dogs can be seen to watch their masters with love, a mouse watched Robert Burns with fear. Gos watched intently. It was an alert, concentrated, piercing look. My duty at present was not to return it. Hawks are sensitive to the eye and do not like to be regarded. It is their prerogative to regard. The tact of the austringer in this matter was now delightful to me. It was necessary to stand still or to walk gently in the mellow light of the barn, staring straight in front. The attitude was to be conciliatory, yielding, patient, but certain of a firm objective. One was to stand, looking past the hawk into the shadows, making minute and cautious movements, with every faculty on the stretch. There was a rabbit's head in the glove, split in order to show the brains. With this I was to stroke the talons, the chest, the entering edge of the wings. If it annoyed him in one way I must desist immediately, even before he was annoyed: if in another, so that he would peck at what annoyed him, I must continue. Slowly, endlessly, love-givingly, persistently, it was my business to distinguish the annoyances: to stroke and tease the talons, to recite, to make the kindest remonstrances, to flirtingly whistle.

After an hour or two of this, I began to bethink myself. He had already begun to calm down, and would sit on the glove without much bating. But he had suffered a long and terrible journey, so that perhaps it would be better not to 'watch' him (keep him awake) this first night. Perhaps I would let him recuperate a little, free him in the barn, and only come to him at intervals.

It was when I went to him at five minutes past three in the morning, that he stepped voluntary to the fist. Hitherto he had been found in inaccessible places, perched on the highest rafter or flying away from perch to perch. Now, smoothing up to him with stretched hand and imperceptible feet, I was rewarded with a triumph. Gos, with confident but partly disdainful gesture, stepped to the out-feeling glove. He began, not only to peck the rabbit, but distantly to feed.

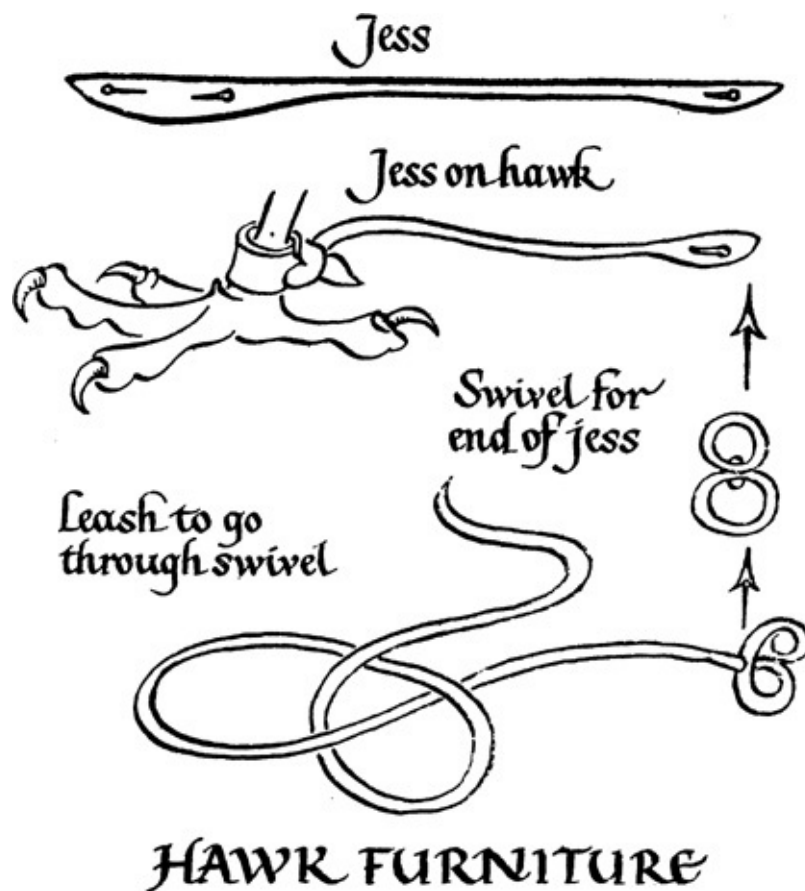
It was at ten past four that we encountered next, and already there was a stirring of the dawn. A just-lightriness of the sky, noticed at once on stepping from the kitchen fire, a coldness in the air and humidity underfoot, told that that God who indifferently administers justice had again ordained the miracle. I stepped from the cottage fire to the future air, up earlier even than the birds, and went to my grand captive in his beamed barn. The brighter light shone on his primaries, a steely lustre, and at ten to five the glow in the small two-shilling lamp was vanquished. Outside, in greyness and dim twilight the very first birds not sang but moved on their perches. An angler who had been sleepless went past in the half mist to tempt the carp of the lake. He stopped outside the lattice, looked in upon us, but was urged to take his way. Gos bore him fairly well.

He was eating now, pettishly, on the fist, and Rome was not built in a day. Rome was the city in which Tarquin ravished Lucrece; and Gos was Roman as well as Teutonic. He was a Tarquin of the meat he tore, and now the man who owned him decided that he had learned enough. He had met a strange fisherman through the dawning window: he had learned to bite at rabbits' legs, though mincingly: and when he was hungrier he would be more humble.

I came away through the deep dew to make myself a cup of tea: then rapturously, from six until half past nine in the morning, I went to sleep.

*Wednesday*

At ten o'clock on the next day the hawk had not seen humanity for four hours, although he was sharp set. He had probably also been asleep during that time (unless the daylight and uncertainty would have kept him awake), so that, although he was hungry, he was partly liberated from the imposition of a human personality. He would no longer step to the glove, as he had done since three o'clock, but again fled from rafter to rafter as if he were just out of the basket. It was a set-back in the process of success, and it caused a scene.



A hawk was held by a pair of jesses, one on each leg, which were united at the ends remote from the leg by means of a swivel through which the leash could be passed.

One of Gos's jesses being worn out at the swivel hole, it had been impossible to pass the leash (a leather boot lace in my case) through its proper swivel. I could not attach the swivel. For that matter, still lacked a swivel. So the two jesses had been tied together, and then knotted to a piece of string for leash. Why the leash had not then been tied to a perch, thus preventing his escape, I am not able to remember. Probably I had no perch, and anyway I was in the position of having to discover all these things by practice. It has never been easy to learn life from books.

The upshot was that now, loping away from his tormentor on silent wings, the bird caught his leash on a nail and hung head downward in rage and terror. It was in this mood that we were to begin his first full day, and the curious result of it was that immediately he had been secured he began to eat ravenously, standing square and easy, until he had consumed a whole leg. He was always more amenable after a good fuss, as I found later.

A boy for whom I had once kept two sparrow-hawks, arrived at half after twelve. It had been possible during the still hours to make a careful inventory of the hawk's plumage, and the results were not satisfactory. The tips of all the primary wing feathers were snapped off for about an eighth of an inch, and the whole tail had been skewed sideways by his struggles in the basket, until it was not possible to distinguish any details in the horrid tangle. The way to straighten out the tail feathers was to dip them

into almost boiling water for half a minute. It was necessary to decide whether this ought to be done now or later. If now, and if with a clumsy and acrimonious scene, it would mar those first amicable impressions which were said to be so important in every walk of life. If later, and also with a scene, it might undo whole weeks of training. I took the bold step and put the saucepan on the fire. I might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb, I thought, and so I would introduce the boy to the hawk at the same time. He would be useful in the subsequent operation.

The first stage in training a hawk was called 'manning' him: and this meant to make him accustomed to man in all his activities, so that he was no longer frightened. With a falcon, you first accustomed him to yourself in the dark, later in shaded light, later by day: finally you brought him to a stranger who had been instructed to sit quite still without looking at him, and so on. A goshawk might take about two months, before he would tolerate motor cars and everything else. This was the reason why the fisherman's visit had been an interesting step, why the introduction of the boy, in full daylight, was now to be a crisis.

The crisis was successful. Thinking about it in advance, as one had to plot extempore each step in the training of a hawk, I had kept back the rabbit's liver, a tit-bit, as a bribe similar to the jam in which they used to give us powders. I told the boy my plans, went down to Gos and fed him with half the liver; admitted the boy five minutes later; waited till the hawk had taken stock of him: brought him, on the left hand, three times up to my chest — nearer, nearer, finally touching — and at the fourth time, passing the right hand gently over his back, held him soft but firm in a single movement. Talking to him, holding him compactly so that because he could not struggle he would not afterwards remember it as a struggle, we dipped the tail feathers into the saucepan, changed the worn jess for a new one, substituted a proper leather leash for the piece of string, and pressed Gos gently back on the fist, without an unhappy memory. Immediately, although the boy was there, Gos fell upon the remainder of the liver, and wolfed it as if he had never eaten anywhere but on the glove: square-straddled, grip-taloned, mantling over the bloody morsels, tearing at them like the eagle of Prometheus.

'Isn't he lovely!' said the boy, with awe and reverence, and a proper lust to have one too.

## *Thursday*

A keeper of long-winged hawks used to be called a falconer, of short-winged hawks an austringer. The word was derived from the same root as ostrich, the biggest of birds. The training of the goshawk, the largest European short-winged hawk, might be expected to last about two months. In this time an ungovernable creature would have been taught to do, under government, what it would instinctively have done in two or three days in a free state. Two months was a long time.

What a goshawk learned in one day would rarely be appreciable to anybody but its master, so cautious and delicate was the progress, and the real difficulty of writing a book upon the subject would be to know which detail ought to be left out. I had decided to write a book. In the hawk's day-book every meal was entered, as it happened, with its time and amount, and every step, forward or backward, was noted with the tedium of true love. From this a patient reader would have to be spared. Yet half the interest, if there were any, in a book about falconry, would obviously reside in these very details. Then again, there was the danger of being didactic or too technical, and there was the folly of thinking that anybody would want to buy a book about mere birds — with no filmstresses in it, and no close-up hug in the last chapter. All the same, I had to write a book of some sort, for I only had a hundred pounds in the world and my keeper's cottage cost me five shillings a week. It seemed best to write about what I was interested in.

My intellectual friends of those days, between the wars, used to say to me: 'Why on earth do you waste your talents feeding wild birds with dead rabbits?' Was this a man's work today? They urged that I was an intelligent fellow: I must be serious. 'To arms!' they cried. 'Down with the Fascists, and Long Live the People!' Thus, as we have since seen, everybody was to fly to arms, and shoot the people.

It was useless to tell them that I would rather shoot rabbits than people.

But what on earth was the book to be about? It would be about the efforts of a second-rate philosopher who lived alone in a wood, being tired of most humans in any case, to train a person who was not human, but a bird. These efforts might have some value because they were continually faced with those difficulties which the mind has to circumvent, because falconry was an historic though dying sport, because the faculties exercised were those which thrived among trees rather than houses, and because the whole thing was inexpressibly difficult. There were two men I knew of by correspondence, to whom one could turn for advice. They were busy themselves, and might take a fortnight to answer a letter. With the aid of these answers, and of three printed books, I was trying to reconquer a territory over which the contemporaries of Chaucer had rambled free.

Down with the rabbits then, and long live the people. If my readers liked to take a patient excursion into the fields and back into the past, so. And if not, well; at least I would not shoot the one who did not read me.

### *Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday*

I would have to start with sleep. There must have been many thousands of humans living then who had had no sleep for three days and three nights, on account of the first World War. But the point was that the austringer, since he rode to battle in the train of William, had been accustomed to perform this feat for three nights, every time he acquired a passage hawk. Man against bird, with God for an umpire, they had sat each other out for three thousand years. When the austringer was married or provided with assistants, it had no doubt been easy to cheat in the great match. He would have taken a sea-water now and then, while another carried on the battle. But when he was a bachelor, when poor and without assistance, he, in his own person, had vanquished the endurance of the king of birds by pitting against it the endurance of a servant of man.

From that Monday morning until four o'clock on the Thursday morning, I had six and a half hours of odd sleep. It was enjoyable. The watching of hawks, the triumph over them (as it were) man against man, the extremely beautiful experiences of night denied to so large a percentage of civilization, the feeling of triumphant endurance which emerged from so many hells in which sleep was lusted for, the weary joy with which the succeeding capitulations of the enemy were noted one after the other, it was these things which, under the heading of their days, I must try to remember.

It would be better to leave them in the jumble to which the greed for sleep reduced them, just bringing to coherence that maze of almost somnambulant entries in the day-book, stragglingly written with one hand while the hawk sat on the other. They were a cry from hell, but of the triumphant and delighted damned. 'If you don't mind the inconvenience of sitting up with him three nights,' said my authority, Gilbert Blaine, 'the falcon may be tamed in three days.' Magnificent meiosis! Unconquerable martyr to the noble science!

There were two places: a small kitchen, with a fire in it and an easy chair, was one, and the other was that lamp-lit barn. The wind came through the cracks in the weather-boarding on one side, went out through the lattice work into the night which the lamp made black. A few sticks, bottles, half bricks, spider's webs and part of a rusty oven adorned the Rembrandt interior. This was the torture

chamber, the medieval dungeon in which the robber baron was to be tormented. One felt like an executioner, very much as if the black mask ought to have concealed one's face, as one worked by di- wick-light in solitude amid the shrieks of the victim. Like a hare, like a child in agony, like a crazed captive in horrors of the Bastille, Gos screamed as he bated, hung twisting upside down with yell upon yell. And then, suddenly, there was an owl outside. The screams were answered. 'A moi! A moi! Auita! Hilfe!' And 'Coming! Coming!' cried the owl: 'Be brave, we will help, hold out!' It was eerie, terrifying almost, to stand between the counter-answered shrieks of the martyr and his compatriot, in the dungeon silent and night-stricken.

The day-book holds forgotten pictures. There was the man swaying gently to and fro on his feet, like a pendulum. He held the hawk on one fist and a rabbit's leg in the other, and he was reciting. His eyes were shut, and so were the hawk's. Both were asleep. There was the man counting the diminishing number of bates at each visit: there were the walks along solitary ridings during the day-time, the mental calculations at each advance, the half-hours by the kitchen fire in which pen and whisky tried to keep pace with sleep, the fingers which smarted from pecks, the fetching of coal through the dewy night grass under an enormous orange moon in its last quarter: there were mist, wet boots, silence, solitude, stars, success and obedience.

On the last night everything came to a head. Man's stamina had failed with hawk's, so that now I had convinced myself that he might be watched in the kitchen. It had a tiled floor which his mutes would not stain, a fire, an aladdin lamp, and a chair. My dear bitch Brownie sat on a chair to the right of the fire, myself to the left, and the hawk stood on an improvised perch in the middle. Screaming no longer, but cheeping like a robin, Gos did not know which way to look. As the strong lamp was turned up he watched it closely, for it was magic. The beam rose to the ceiling, and he followed it upward to its circle of light. I turned it up and down to keep him awake, and his head went with the light. Raising his tail, he squirted a jet of mutes across the floor, looked round in tired pride of creation. The hours went and his head drooped, his eyes blinked and sealed. I got up to take him on fist so that he should not sleep: but was stupid with watching also, and fumbled the knots. The wings swept out at the wrong moment, the leash slipped, and the worn-out eagle was sitting on the top of a Sèvres tureen, the only piece of valuable china in the room. The sleep-shotten man collected his wits to face the new crisis. Both were too beaten to give each other trouble. But, just as the hawk was being tied to the perch again, the bitch, as a third party, joined in. Brownie, who had lived as often my sole and always my chief and most beloved companion for two years, had for days and nights been without notice. Her anxious face, watching this incomprehensible desertion, had become more and more pitiful without receiving pity. Suddenly it was too much for her. She came humbly, heart-brokenly, asking with fear and desolation for any re-assurance. Of this new, mad-eyed and absent master she was even afraid, and came up in a way which it would hurt to describe. She said: Am I for always thrown off? So now the man had to pull himself together for a new demand, to comfort the poor creature out of a heart with no energy to spare. Her puzzled and sorrowful face was too much for exhaustion.

When Gos finally gave in, the conquest was a visible one. Sitting on the fist, his head drooped, and his wings mantled. No longer firm and spruce at the shoulders, they hung down on either side of the body, humbly resting their forward edges against the supporting arm. The eyelids irresistibly rose up over the capitulated eyes, the head nodded for the sleep which his master, as tired as he was, was forced by a gentle movement to deny him. Between the two protagonists a link had been established, of pity on the one side and confidence on the other. We had waited patiently for seventy-two hours for this moment; the moment at which the hawk, coerced by no cruelty of mine but only by the desire for sleep (which he did not connect with me), could first say with confidence: 'I am so sleepy that I will trust this glove as a perch to sleep on, even though you stroke me, even though you have no wings and a beak of pliable gristle.'

A solitary and self-supporting austringer had little time in which to live a life of his own, could not, in fact, live at all except in so far as his life was his work. In this respect he resembled the agricultural labourer of the last century. For every holiday which he took away from the hawk, the hawk would go back in its training twice as fast as he could hope to make it go forward. Theoretically he ought to have carried the creature with him wherever he went, from dawn till dark, and ought only to have visited the places which suited the hawk. He was manning it now, introducing it successively to one shock after another. Its excursions were to be planned on this basis, so that it met a stranger standing still, a stranger walking and running, two strangers, children, groups, a bicyclist, a motor car, traffic, and so on. All the time it ought to have lived, and had to eat, on the glove alone. It had got to learn to regard that glove as its natural home and perch, so that, when the great and distant day arrived for flying it free, it would return to the glove automatically, having no life outside it. The quickest way to train a goshawk would have been to get up at six o'clock and to carry the bird about for twelve hours every day, for a month or two, without intermission.<sup>[2]</sup> So that even a retained austringer would have been a busy man.

I got up again at noon, for now the problem of food was becoming pressing. There was not only the ideal of carrying Gos all day, but also the necessity of killing his food and dressing my own. This brings in the next picture, not that of endurance by night nor of the ceaseless daily hardihood implicit in this kind of colonist's existence, but the picture of the weather and the season. Nothing was more woven into the stuff of falconry than the sun and the wind. Being so much out in the open gave a tone to the whole thing, a background to life very different from any local background of tree or house. The same field or hawk was changed in rain, the same circumstances were happy or sorrowful as the sun shone. When I had been about the business for a month or two, farmers would ask me whether it was going to be fine on the morrow in much the same way as one is supposed to ask a mariner. They reposed but little confidence in my judgment, it is true, but occasionally they would take the trouble to ask and to reflect upon the answer; for they knew that my eye was in the sky as much as theirs. I was wrong about as often as they were; which was generally.

So there should be given a picture of the weather as we started. It was at the end of July, and, though the spring and summer had been miserable in England, just then we had a few fine moments. This cast a happy tone over the first days with Gos, so that they remember themselves as days of long walking. In the afternoons mainly I used to go out for his food, for it was preferable that he should be given fresh food every day. There were long tours, very contented to be alone at last, with the gun-barrel warm in the sun: there was the busy life of the summer hedges, with the wide stalks, and the quite untroubled murder of rabbits sitting. One was shooting not in the least for sport, but for the pot, and it was necessary to get back to the hawk as quickly as possible. The necessity of wasting no time and of killing with certainty had a terrible effect upon the shooting, making one poke out of anxiety, and I wondered what would happen when the next World War had reduced us to savagery and hunting for ourselves. The art of shooting flying would fall into abeyance then, with the looted cartridges scarce and the food so precious. When the cartridges had run right out the goshawk would be a real blessing. The French called him *cuisinier*, the caterer for the mess.

Then there was the queerly savage picture of the sun-broiled man, after he had crept upon the rabbit and assassinated it, knocking it quickly on the head, throwing it upon its back, and immediately beginning to draw the sharp blade of his knife across the skin of the stomach. The leisurely gentility with which the shooting man harls the dead body, and slings it over the hasp of a gate as something no longer interesting, were gone. I supposed a concealed watcher would have thought one quite animal again, like an aborigine or a fox, or even like the hawk itself. The sunny picture was first one of

creeping movement, split up into sudden activity by the loud bang, the rush, the *coup de grâce*: and then again it was static, a little huddle of small movements mantling over the prey. It was necessary to eviscerate these rabbits as quickly as possible, because it kept them fresh.

It was on this day that I saw what I then thought was a pair of sparrow-hawks. Most shooting people in England notice one kind of hawk, the kestrel, and will shoot any hawk on the supposition that the species is antipathetic to the rearing of game. But now that one was suddenly plunged for the first time into the hawk world, stepping as it were on to another stratum of life or layer in the air, one began noticing hawks wherever one went, so that it was astonishing to see how many there were, previously unsuspected, in just a small circuit of a few miles. It was their wariness which made them escape observation, unless they were being looked for.

I was beginning to be accustomed to the type of cry given by hawks. Gos had several varieties, from his shrieks to his tiny child notes of irritation, whichipipee, eekipip, chip-chip; and each variety of predatory bird, including the little owl, had a special note which distinguished him from his fellows: yet the generic type remained constant among all of them, a beakiness of music which did not come from the throat. So I noticed that there was something hawkish going on, the moment I slipped into Three Parks Wood. Mew cried one voice, and mew answered another. Then, as it seemed, from all over the wood, the little voices cried and replied. Cui-cui-cui-cui-cui. It must have been a family, the parents and two or three eyases already well grown but not yet driven out. I was lucky enough to see two of them close. They came, chasing each other in furious play, darting between the branches until they were almost upon us: then they swung round the bole of a tree, showing their barred underparts in two perfect vertical banks, as if they were rounding a pylon at Hatfield, and vanished in the dim leafiness of the full summer wood.

### *Friday, Saturday, Sunday*

They were days of attack and counter-attack, a kind of sweeping to and fro across disputed battle fields. Gos had gone back a long way toward wildness with his first sleep. Each day the ceaseless call of housekeeping and lardering called Crusoe away from him, as his educational needs called him back, and so it was backward and forward the whole time. Sometimes he would step to the glove after hesitation, but without temper, and sometimes he would fly away as if I had come to do him murder. We walked alone for hours every day, Gos sometimes conversing in amicable if puzzled mews, sometimes flapping and bating twice every minute. All the time there was a single commandment to be observed. Patience. There was no other weapon. In the face of all set-backs, of all stupidities, of all failures and scenes and exasperating blows across the face with his wings as he struggled, there was only one thing one could seek to do. Patience ceased to be negative, became a positive action. For it had to be active benevolence. One could torture the bird, merely by giving it a hard and bitter look.

No wonder the old austringers used to love their hawks. The effort which went into them, the worry which they occasioned, the two months of human life devoted to them both waking and dreaming, these things made the hawk, for the man who trained it, a part of himself. I was startled by the upper classes, surprised by the gentleman who allowed a ghillie to gaff his salmon for him — it made the salmon so much the less his — and, with hawking especially, could not understand a nobleman who kept a falconer. What pleasure would he get, taking this strange bird from the fist of a stranger and hurling it into the air? But to the falconer, to the man who for two months had made that bird, almost like a mother nourishing her child inside her, for the sub-consciousness of the man and the bird became really linked by a mind's cord: to the man who had created out of a part of his life, what pleasure to fly, what terror of disaster, what triumph of success!

The end in view was to make Gos come for food. In the end he was to come a distance of at least hundred yards, the moment he was called, but at present it was enough if he would first not fly away when I approached. Next he had to learn to step to the fist for a reward of food. (The way to every creature's heart was through the belly. This was why women had insisted on the prerogative of being allowed to cook.) Finally he must jump to the fist with one flap of the wings, as a preliminary to increasing the distance.

It was only patience which could achieve this end. I realized that the hawk must be tied to his perch by a leash, and now for three days stood a yard away from him, holding meat out in my hand. I went to him again and again, speaking to him from outside the mews, opening the door slowly, edging forward on feet that moved like the hands of a clock.

Here comes (one thought, suddenly catching oneself out) that excellent piece of work called man, with his capacity for looking before and after, his abilities to reflect upon the enigmas of philosophy, and the minted storehouse of an education that had cost between two and three thousand pounds, walking sideways to a tied bird, with his hand held out in front of him, looking the other way and mewling like a cat.

But it was pure joy, even joy to stand absolutely motionless for fifteen minutes, or while one slowly counted a thousand.

Part of the joy was that now, for the first time in my life, I was absolutely free. Even if I only had hundred pounds, I had no master, no property, no fetters. I could eat, sleep, rise, stay or go as I liked. I was freer than the Archbishop of Canterbury, who no doubt had his fixed times and seasons. I was as free as a hawk.

Gos had to be taught to know his call. Later on he might get out of sight when being flown at game, and had to be so taught that he could be recalled by the whistle. Most falconers used an ordinary metal whistle, but my escaped soul felt too poetical for that. I felt that Gos was too beautiful to be shrilled at with a policeman's mechanical note. He was to come to a tune, and if I could have played I would have bought a penny whistle. But I could only whistle with my mouth, and that had to do. Our melody was a hymn, 'The Lord's my Shepherd' — the old metrical Scottish one.

Hawks were taught to come to their whistle by associating it with food, like Pavlov's famous dog. Whenever they were fed the whistle was blown, a kind of dinner gong. So now, as one sidled up to the fierce, suspicious eye, the mews reverberated day in and day out with this sweet highland tune. One came to hate it in the end, but not so much as one would have hated anything else. Besides, I whistled it so sadly that there was always a faint interest in trying to keep to the right notes.

## *Monday*

Gos had on the whole a pessimistic and apprehensive expression, a characteristic of most predatory creatures. We are pugnacious through our inferiority complexes. Even the pike's ironic mouth has a hint of depression in it.

The day was probably typical of training a goshawk, only most austringers had better tempers. It was now nearly a week since I had devoted most of my time and all my thought to him, it was several days since he had begun stepping fairly regularly to the glove, and that morning he had been carried for four hours. So it was not rewarding when the extraordinary creature bated away the moment I entered at two-fifteen. I sat down for ten minutes about a yard from his perch, talking and whistling to him, holding out a piece of liver. He only bated absent-mindedly, so I went to pick him up. Now he bated in earnest, as if he had never seen me before. We had a scene in which at least the master behaved well, and at last we were able to sit down with him on the glove, trying to make him feed. H



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