

Poems by *William Thompson*

Mockingbird

How would those pilfered notes he heckles
the other birds with sound in English?

*Sing skies of couple-color glance...
O living hand this brightening muse...*

Except my versions lack his steadfast
Malice. His racket's always loudest

Over high rooftops, when he's twirling
Down again, like the last seed

Blown from a maple tree. He galls
His neighbors with their own songs' shreds,

But that won't do: he has to show
The skill in his contempt, the flair.

WILLIAM THOMPSON

Goose

Goose

(for Herman, at The Acres of the Golden Pheasant
bird hospital, Truro, Nova Scotia)

Decoyish until summoned
from balance of sleep,
your blinded patient lunged,
slipped on rubbery spatula feet

and, thrashing with one
wing, splashed its way out
from the beveled watertrough
onto damp dirt,

sniffed dogwise in semi-
circles, lip to the ground,
hissing us one step back except
for you, Herman, who'd strewn

the grain for it, muttering while it ate,
them goddam hunters, somebody ought to....

William Thompson teaches at Troy University. He has recently edited *Fashioned Pleasures: 24 Poets Play Bouts-Rimes with Shakespeare's Rhymes*, forthcoming from Parallel Press.