

TEREUS

John V. Hicks

Tereus the hawk, flesh of his own flesh
Searing his tongue, searches the grey sky
For fugitive wings; half fury, half despair,
Tereus' strident cry
Pierces the darkening air.

She who lay once entailed within the mesh
Of lust and savagery, and she who smote
Young Itys down, so that the very floor
Ran blood, that terror note
Shall hear for evermore.

'O swallow, swallow, flying south,'
Speed you past the river's mouth;
Get you from the storm that rages
In his heart who hunts you down the ages.

'O nightingale upon my tree,'
Quench your rising song and flee
The vengeance of the wrathful one
Who feasted upon Procne's butchered son.