Still, Citizen Sparrow

BY [RICHARD WILBUR](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/richard-wilbur)

Still, citizen sparrow, this vulture which you call

Unnatural, let him but lumber again to air

Over the rotten office, let him bear

The carrion ballast up, and at the tall

Tip of the sky lie cruising. Then you’ll see

That no more beautiful bird is in heaven’s height,

No wider more placid wings, no watchfuller flight;

He shoulders nature there, the frightfully free,

The naked-headed one. Pardon him, you

Who dart in the orchard aisles, for it is he

Devours death, mocks mutability,

Has heart to make an end, keeps nature new.

Thinking of Noah, childheart, try to forget

How for so many bedlam hours his saw

Soured the song of birds with its wheezy gnaw,

And the slam of his hammer all the day beset

The people’s ears. Forget that he could bear

To see the towns like coral under the keel,

And the fields so dismal deep. Try rather to feel

How high and weary it was, on the waters where

He rocked his only world, and everyone’s.

Forgive the hero, you who would have died

Gladly with all you knew; he rode that tide

To Ararat; all men are Noah’s sons.

What do you think of this poem? Write anything you want.

What are some differences between sparrows and vultures?

Why does the author consider the vulture to be beautiful?

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