

The Works and Days of Hesiod

Lines 202-212 – The Hawk and the Nightingale – The Claims of Power

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"Let him hear the advice of Hesiod. . . . The advice of Hesiod is good." —Aristotle

"Lampon . . . greatly honors the sayings of Hesiod, the one he declares and recommends to his sons."
—Pindar

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The Hawk and the Nightingale – The Claims of Power

Lines 202-212

Reading 5

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This reading comes from the Cave's
The Best of Hesiod's Theogony & Works and Days
(where it appears as chapter five of the *Works and Days*).

NOW I WILL tell a fable to kings even though they are wise.

In this manner the hawk spoke to the songbird, the nightingale with the piebald neck. Seizing her with his talons, he carried her up into the highest clouds. And there she was, weeping piteously, run through with his curved talons. With overwhelming might, he spoke this word to her:

"Ill-fated thing! Why all the shrieking noise? Now

you're held by someone far better than you—stronger! Therefore, you must go wherever I carry you, even though you are a singer. If I wish, I'll make a meal of you. Or I'll let you go.

"Only the foolish one wishes to challenge the one who is mightier than he is. That one ends up without victory and suffering pains on top of shame."

That's what the swift-flying hawk said, the bird with long wings.

So ends Reading 5, "The Hawk and the Nightingale – The Claims of Power." **See you in Reading 6, "The Two Cities – On Justice and Needless Violence."**

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