

## Thanks a lot, Shakespeare, for the Starling

By Jonathan Greenhause

The window, single-paned to preserve not heat but historical significance,  
presses down upon the simple plank preventing it from shutting;  
& in that humble rectangular board,  
there's a hole through which reasoning escapes, a metallic  
accordion-like tube stretching from the dryer's back end to the opening  
where the starling enters, where it places twig after twig  
to construct a metaphor for impracticality

& absurdity, a snapshot of modern life, of our climatic uncertainty,  
like building a home on the rim of a smoldering caldera,  
its flimsy walls trembling. In 1890, 60 starlings were released in Central Park  
by the American Acclimatization Society  
because Shakespeare made mention of them in *Henry IV, Part I*, wrote  
"Nay, I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak  
nothing but Mortimer, and give it to him to keep his anger still in motion."

By the end of the play, the battle rages on, the Hundred Years' War  
still unresolved; now we've got over 200 million starlings in North America.  
My wife & I let it stay. We hang wet clothes  
upon the backs of chairs, upon our shower rod, learn to harness solar energy.  
We do without these modern conveniences, teach our 2 sons  
to appreciate the subtle rumblings  
of an egg set to crack, a fledgling poised to press its luck upon the ledge.