

Jesus Feeds the Birds

by [Tania Runyan](#) in the [August 2024](#) issue

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And it's not always pretty.

Those lilies clothed in Solomon's splendor
splotch with the leftover tufts

of field mice. For every hummingbird
darting at an orchid, every goldfinch
nibbling a quivering primrose stalk,

is an osprey disemboweling a flounder
or a golden eagle snapping
a badger's neck midair. They do not

sow or heap seed heads in barns.

They swoop and pluck
in the moment, just as their meals

suddenly find themselves
sliding down a gullet. Of course I can't
forget them, the ragged spirits of prey,

the grains and spores that never
had a chance to germinate. The dead
scamper and bloom in the shadow

of my wings, spreading and trailing
in a train of many colors, and oh,
the conversations we have.