

AFTER READING

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An abstract is constructed first as follows: the benefit of studying a starling is unknown. Perhaps heat from their wings will guide me, but why do I have such petty concerns? I forage without thinking, think without foraging, all the while wondering why I do it. All the answers I seek can be found in the abstract

wonderment of values, departure to forage in new territory, derive what benefit I can from what I find there. Consideration sorts thoughts as they come, and I am inclined to defend my territory. Is heat the reason birds have come together? All those feathered bodies, iridescent, make a sort of tapestry that winds across the field. They are not abstract, but I will make them so and benefit.

The birds continue as a summary: foraging occurs not far from common roosts; a bird may forage up to twelve kilometers from its roost, which is a locus of heat, the diurnal activity center. Benefits of this behavior include snails, rate of energy intake, unlimited supply of grain. The abstract begins to fail me since I am incapable of remaining in just one place. I may forage without finding anything of value, and in the abstract sense

of course I don't. It's easy to forget all my troubles can be solved with the benefit of my lack of obligation to the benefit derived from an idea which has no sort of starling in it. What I am saying is that all we can really do, unless we are a starling, is forage

around and grab hold of something and see if we can look at it. The abstract: beautiful, all-encompassing, in which benefit is endpoint; the abstract tries to sort and forage, and in us it finds heat.

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**“TWO OBSERVATIONS SUGGEST THAT THE STARLING
MAY USE ITS BILL TO FREE ITS BODY”**

Only after proper introduction to the birds in question can their legs be banded. Courtship demands proximity but the singing perch of the starling is a negotiable distance from other birds. Two males need no introduction to sing in the same place; their proximity to each other is a given in such a large flock. There's no interest in the next bird until later in the season for the migrant on her way

back. Research written later shows the starling needs no introduction to world travel; bands of birds and people in uneasy proximity to each other suffer from questions they can't ask or answer, on the way towards different places but who band together for a while like starlings curve and bend, not with the wind, but in response to some factor we don't know about. Later,

some glimmer may come, much later when the image fades. To think about proximity is to want an introduction to everything around us. It's a way of moving apart from the starling towards a certain, heavy band of words in argument like those who ban a book, an argument of later value, one that only flocks of starlings can articulate. Only our proximity

to shadows and all the ways they offer no instruction. The starling has her band of introductions and only later can we recognize proximity as a way in.