Chapter 3: Birds of Paradise

Match the poetic words (Column A) with their correct meanings (Column B):

Column A	Column B
Delicate; easily broken	Flashing
Shining suddenly and brightly	Cadenced
No longer in existence	Wheeled
Having a rhythmic flow	Extinct
Made a high, clear ringing sound	Whistled
Moved in circles or spirals	Ethereal
Appropriate; belonging naturally	Enchanting
A sharp, high sound made by air	Tinkled
Extremely delicate, heavenly	Fragility
Delightfully charming	Proper

Read each line from the poem and choose the most accurate interpretation:

1. "Golden-winged, silver-winged, / Winged with flashing flame"

    a) The birds are literal firebirds, with wings made of burning gold and silver.

    b) The birds are dangerous creatures that can ignite objects with their wings.

    c) The colours symbolize wealth, suggesting the birds are rare and valuable.

    d) The poet uses metallic and fiery imagery to emphasize the birds' radiant, otherworldly beauty.

2. "Birds without a name: / Singing songs in their own tongue"

    a) The birds are silent, communicating only through gestures.

    b) Their namelessness and unique language highlight their mystical, untamed nature.

    c) The poet forgot the birds' names and invented a language for them.

    d) They mimic human speech but in a garbled, unintelligible way.

3. "High above my head they wheeled, / Far out of reach"

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a) The poet feels jealous because he cannot fly like the birds.

b) The birds fly in predictable, mechanical circles like a Ferris wheel.

c) Their soaring flight symbolizes freedom and the unattainable divine.

d) The birds are afraid of humans and deliberately stay far away.

4. "The wind it whistled through their wings, / Where in heaven they sang"

a) The wind creates actual music by blowing through their feathers.

b) Their song is so beautiful it seems to merge with the sounds of nature.

c) The poet imagines the birds are angels singing in the sky.

d) The line describes a storm approaching, signalled by the whistling wind.

5. "Birds of Paradise" (Title)

a) Literal birds that live in tropical rainforests.

b) A scientific term for birds with exceptionally long tails.

c) A metaphor for unattainable dreams or lost wonders.

d) A reference to birds kept in cages for human entertainment.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the primary effect of describing the birds as "Golden-winged, silver-winged, / Winged with flashing flame"?

a) It creates a vivid image of their radiant, almost supernatural beauty.

b) It suggests the birds are artificial, crafted from precious metals by humans.

c) It implies the birds are dangerous and can burn anyone who touches them.

d) It indicates the birds are wealthy, symbolizing prosperity and abundance.

2. Why does the poet emphasize that the birds are "without a name"?

a) To show they are unimportant and unworthy of human attention.

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b) To highlight their mysterious, untamed existence beyond human labels.

c) To suggest the poet forgot their names while writing the poem.

d) To criticize scientists for failing to classify these birds properly.

3. The phrase "Singing songs in their own tongue" implies that the birds:

a) Mimic human languages but in a distorted, mocking way.

b) Are silent but use their wings to create musical sounds.

c) Repeat the same monotonous tune over and over.

d) Communicate in a unique, divine language incomprehensible to humans.

4. How does the line "High above my head they wheeled, / Far out of reach" contribute to the poem's theme?

a) It shows the birds are showing off their flying skills to impress humans.

b) It suggests the poet feels superior because he cannot fly like the birds.

c) It reinforces the idea of the birds as transcendent, unattainable beings.

d) It indicates the birds are lost and trying to find their way home.

5. The 'cadenced clang of the birds' wings suggests:

a) A harsh, jarring noise that frightens the poet.

b) A rhythmic, almost musical quality to their flight.

c) The sound of metal crashing as the birds fight each other.

d) An irregular pattern that disrupts the peace of the scene.

6. What does the poet mean by 'Song of songs' in the poem?

a) The most beautiful and divine song imaginable.

b) A literal reference to a specific religious hymn.

c) A song so complex it cannot be written down.

d) A chorus sung by thousands of birds at once.

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7. The line 'The wind it whistled through their wings' primarily appeals to the sense of:

a) Sight, as it describes the visual movement of the wind.

b) Hearing, as it evokes the sound created by their flight.

c) Touch, as it makes the reader feel the wind's pressure.

d) Smell, as it suggests the scent of the birds' feathers.

8. The poem's tone can best be described as:

a) Angry and accusatory toward hunters who threaten the birds.

b) Nostalgic, mourning the loss of the birds' natural habitat.

c) Awe-struck, celebrating the birds' mystical beauty.

d) Humorous, mocking the birds' unusual appearance.

9. The birds' lack of a nest on earth symbolizes:

a) Their carelessness and inability to build proper homes.

b) The poet's belief that they are actually fallen angels.

c) A scientific fact about this species' migratory habits.

d) Their connection to heaven rather than the mortal world.

10. The poem's central message is:

a) A celebration of nature's fleeting, magical wonders.

b) A warning about the dangers of deforestation to bird species.

c) A critique of humans who try to cage wild birds.

d) A call to study these birds more closely before they vanish.

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