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| **[William Butler Yeats](http://www.web-books.com/Classics/Poetry/Anthology/Yeats/index.htm)** |  |

**Leda and the Swan**

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still  
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed  
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,  
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push  
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?  
And how can body, laid in that white rush,  
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engenders there  
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower  
And Agamemnon dead.  
                                        Being so caught up,  
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,  
Did she put on his knowledge with his power  
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?



(Leonardo (left) and Boucher (right))