

The Tauhou (Or Silvereye) (1903)

Johannes C. Andersen

Transcribed and edited by Philip Steer

A summer long the sun and thou¹

In flowering bush have lingered merry,

Ye both have left the bushlands now,

Where neither flower there is, nor berry,

And insects, as the days turn cold,

Hide deep in bark, and leaf, and mould.

The keen winds and thy plaintive cry

Have come together down the glen;

Is Earth unkind, o Silver-eye,

Thou comest to the haunts of men.²

Ah; we desert our gay haunts thus

When life grows cold, unkind to us.

¹ Thou. The tauhou/silvereye is a small songbird, distinguished by a white ring around its eye, that was introduced from Australia in the 1850s ("tauhou" translates as "stranger").

² Haunts of men. The tauhou/silvereye is found in suburban environments and farmland, as well as forests.

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