

Round 1 Group Genre: SciFi Word: Wing Action: Recording a conversation

The Aviary: A Retirement Community

"He volunteered, that's why." The keeper gestured upward. "First time it's worked, tell the truth. Ain't sure what we did right this round."

"Or wrong," Glenn looked at his phone. Video recording time: 12 minutes.

"Nah, that's not it, they volunTEER, see. They ain't got much time left. Might as well live, really live, a little longer," he sauntered toward the atrium's center, smiling. "I'll call him down. Ask him hisself, he'll tell ya."

A whistle echoed in the bright glass dome. Glenn steadied his phone and raised his arm to shield his eyes. A great wind stirred, a whumping echo followed.

"Here he comes!" The wind whipped a stench: an animal cage long past needing cleaned.

Glenn's mouth went dry. Soaring overhead was a naked man whose folds of ancient skin were covered by coarse white hair. 80? 90?

Herman descended. With power. A wing brushed Glenn's outstretched phone arm. Too close! The man landed on crepe-paper legs, knees crackling. He folded his wings - bright white feathers. Herman stared.

"See? Ain't it the greatest? Picked an eagle! Herman how ya feelin' today, bud?"

The white haired man stared with amber eyes. He did not answer.

"Maybe he's not in the mood," said Glenn. He stepped back. The wings shuddered.

Herman's gnarled feet clacked on the tile.

"Release me," his voice a strangled caw. "Release me."

Herman's gaze darted to his keeper, whose hand rested on his pistol.

"Herman, tell Glenn here how you wanted to be a bird."