

Crow's First Lesson By Ted Hughes

God tried to teach Crow how to talk.

'Love,' said God. 'Say, Love.'

Crow gaped, and the white shark crashed into the sea
And went rolling downwards, discovering its own depth.

'No, no,' said God. 'Say Love. Now try it. LOVE.'

Crow gaped, and a bluefly, a tsetse, a mosquito
Zoomed out and down
To their sundry flesh-pots.

'A final try,' said God. 'Now, LOVE.'

Crow convulsed, gaped, retched and
Man's bodiless prodigious head
Bulbed out onto the earth, with swivelling eyes,
Jabbering protest--

And Crow retched again, before God could stop him.

And woman's vulva dropped over man's neck and tightened.

The two struggled together on the grass.

God struggled to part them, cursed, wept--

Crow flew guiltily off.