

## The Falling of the Leaves

W B Yeats

Autumn is over the long leaves that love us,  
And over the mice in the barley sheaves;  
Yellow the leaves of the rowan above us,  
And yellow the wet wild-strawberry leaves.

The hour of the waning of love has beset us,  
And weary and worn are our sad souls now;  
Let us part, ere the season of passion forget us,  
With a kiss and a tear on thy drooping brow.

The Wild Swans at Coole

BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

The trees are in their autumn beauty,  
The woodland paths are dry,  
Under the October twilight the water  
Mirrors a still sky;  
Upon the brimming water among the stones  
Are nine-and-fifty swans.

The nineteenth autumn has come upon me  
Since I first made my count;  
I saw, before I had well finished,  
All suddenly mount  
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings  
Upon their clamorous wings.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,  
And now my heart is sore.  
All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,  
The first time on this shore,  
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,  
Trod with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,  
They paddle in the cold  
Companionable streams or climb the air;  
Their hearts have not grown old;

Passion or conquest, wander where they will,  
Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water,  
Mysterious, beautiful;  
Among what rushes will they build,  
By what lake's edge or pool  
Delight men's eyes when I awake some day  
To find they have flown away?

## TRAGIC AUTUMN

Patrick Kavanagh

Autumn I'd welcome had I  
Known love in summer days  
I would not weep for flowers that die  
If once they'd bloomed for praise.  
I would not cry to any tree  
Leaf lost, a word of misery.  
I would not make lament although  
My harvest were a beggar's woe.

## Autumn, the Nightwalk, the City, the River

David Wheatley

How early the autumn seemed to have come that year,  
the drizzles like moods, the tightness in the air.  
Walking was different: nervous, brisker now  
under the streetlights' tangerine conic glow;  
needing gloves and scarves. I had both,  
And a raincoat pulled up tight around my mouth.  
Direction never mattered on those streets.  
Once I walked all night and called it quits  
somewhere miles from home, then caught the first  
bus back. What mattered was being lost.  
Anywhere would do: I remember suburbs  
plush with hatchbacks parked on tidy kerbs,  
Privets, cherry blossoms, nouveaux riches'  
houses named for saints, complete with cable dishes;  
and then the streets where every window was  
an iron grid across its pane of glass,  
the garden weeds in cracks, a noise ahead –  
a bird, a cat – enough to make me cross the road.  
Any light was harsh: all-night Spars  
and the lit façades of Georgian squares  
I'd hurry past; headlights glared like search-  
beams in their hurtling, quizzical approach.  
But landmarks were always a magnet. I'd be out  
for hours – in sight of open fields – and spot  
a pub or spire I knew, then find myself  
being led by it, with inarticulate relief,  
back in. Home was defeat but consolation too,  
reassurance there was nowhere else to go.  
The clubs all shut, town was deserted all over:  
the only living thing would be the river;  
and one night following it, I got a sense  
of how, if anything did, it left the dead-ends  
of the place behind as, sleek as a dream,

past barracks, churches, courts, the lot, it swam,  
the lights that danced on its surface so many jack-  
o'-lanterns promising no going back,  
for it at least if not for me. I followed it  
all the way to the quay-end steps and sat  
as long as I thought it would take to reach the last buoy  
and from there, dry land forgotten, the open sea.

Samhain  
by John Montague

Sing a song  
for the mistress  
of the bones

the player  
on the black keys  
the darker harmonies

light jig  
of shoe buckles  
on a coffin lid

∞

Harsh glint  
of the wrecker's lantern  
on a jagged cliff

across the ceaseless  
glitter of the spume:  
a seagull's creak.

The damp-haired  
seaweed-stained sorceress  
marshflight of defeat

∞

Chill of winter  
a slowly failing fire  
faltering desire

Darkness of Darkness

we meet on our way  
in loneliness

Blind Carolan  
Blind Raftery  
Blind Tadgh

The Andean Flute  
By Derek Mahon

He dances to that music in the wood  
As if history were no more than a dream.  
Who said the banished gods were gone for good?

The furious rhythm creates a manic mood,  
Piercing the twilight like a mountain stream.  
He dances to that music in the wood.

We might have put on Bach or Buxtehude,  
But a chance impulse chose the primal scream.  
Who said the banished gods were gone for good?

An Inca frenzy fires his northern blood.  
His child-heart picking up the tribal beam,  
He dances to that music in the wood.

A puff of snow bursts where the birches brood;  
Along the lane the earliest snowdrops gleam.  
Who said the banished gods were gone for good?

It is the ancient cry for warmth and food  
That moves him. Acting out an ancient theme,  
He dances to that music in the wood.  
Who said the banished gods were gone for good?

## November John F. Deane

Again the parlour has filled to overflowing  
with the beloved dead – and I

stand distraught outside the great blurred window  
looking in; little light where I am,

a soft persistent starlight; where they are, there are chandeliers,  
though the dead are distant, a little

indistinct; they have been blown, perhaps, through the open door  
into the hallway, like those several

beautifully veined and parti-coloured leaves, old gold and scarlet,  
from the trees that stand

bereft of summer, bare-head to the chilled and chilling  
sky; and have wandered in

through that other door we never opened, and though they are  
a little ruffled at the edges, a little

sere, they are upright and lightly swaying, the best crystal  
in their hands; grandfather, possibly,

in the far corner, by the walnut cabinet, a vague  
moustachioed figure, Nanna, wearing

her best of smiles, serving; closer, by the oil-lamp,  
motherfather, fathermother, relishing –

as they never did before – a happy foolishness; closer still,  
behind the net-curtained window, my

brother, cured of all ills, and laughing; there is a shadowy  
and shrouded host-like figure



moving quietly amongst them, greeting them all with a little  
laughter. Ah well, we have allowed them

this one month to be amongst us, this first mustering  
of winter, as if they were not always there

before our consciousness, calling out against our grieving.

#### Daffodils By Rachel Hegarty

Mi na Marbh, month of the dead is right.  
November, remember the no in November  
as you rake leaves and think... yes,

there's a bag of daffodil bulbs in the shed.  
Nothing for it but the trowel and spike,  
clay on your hands, knee patches of mud,

bulbs settled in soil, made cosy with small  
heaps of earth and there-there pats.  
You spend an hour in the garden.

Labouring away, giving it your all.  
Head down, arse up in the air  
and telling November to kiss it.



# The story of Hallowe'en

**Did you know that Ireland is the original home of Hallowe'en?**

Hallowe'en has been celebrated in Ireland for over 1,000 years. The origins of Hallowe'en can be found in the ancient Celtic harvest festival, Samhain.



The Celts believed that the spirit world was closer to Earth at Samhain, and that 'púcaí', fairies and other spirits would visit the mortal world.

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For this reason, the Celts wore masks to disguise themselves, and large communal fires were lit to ward off evil spirits and ghouls: the original Hallowe'en costumes and bonfires!



Many other modern Hallowe'en traditions began during the Celtic Samhain festival. Trick-or-treating dates back to when people would beg for food, known as 'soul cakes', offering prayers for the dead in exchange.



Hallowe'en was a good time to forecast the future! Many games, along with the traditional cake barmbrack attempted to predict the future for the year ahead.



On Hallowe'en it was traditional to carve lanterns out of turnips. Irish emigrants to America in the 19th century began carving pumpkins instead, because turnips were hard to find!



Irish emigrants brought the tradition of Hallowe'en to their new homes which is why it is celebrated all around the world today!



Happy Hallowe'en!



Ireland

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPD-dJeumPM>

