

## *From The Wild Swans at Coole (1919)*

### *The Wild Swans at Coole°*

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.

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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.

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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?

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## *All Things can Tempt Me*

All things can tempt me from this craft of verse:  
One time it was a woman's face, or worse—  
The seeming needs of my fool-driven land;  
Now nothing but comes readier to the hand  
Than this accustomed toil. When I was young,  
I had not given a penny for a song  
Did not the poet sing it with such airs  
That one believed he had a sword upstairs;  
Yet would be now, could I but have my wish,  
Colder and dumber and deafer than a fish.