

W. B. Yeats, The Wild Swans at Coole  
(London: Macmillan and Co., 1920)

### 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 twi-  
light,  
The first time on this shore,  
The bell-beat of their wings above my  
head,  
Trode 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 ;

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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 ?