Ode to the West Wind

I

O Wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves, dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter's sleights,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Peasant-hood's traveller multitudes: O thou,
Who moistenest the burning bed
The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine arm unseen, or else thy voice shall blow
Her clarion o'er the dreamless earth, and ill
(Driving sweet birds to their heads to feed in air)
With living lines and colours pleasing and bright;
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and Preserver; hear, oh, hear!

I

Then, on whose stream, mad the steep sky's commotion,
Huge clouds like earth's decaying leaves, are shed,
Shook from the rugged branches of Heaven and Ocean.

Angels of rain and lightning: how they are spread
On the blue surface of thine angry surge
Like the bright rain uplifted from the sea

Oh, some heave, Moses, even from the dim verge
Oh, to the mariner to the zenith's height,
The hecks of the approaching storm, thou bring

Oh, of the dying year, to which the closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Oh, of the strange, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, and snow, shall burst: oh, how!
III

They, who elder waken from his summer dreaming
the blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
lied by the call of his crystalline streams.

Beside a pony isle in Bann's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the waves' winter song.

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense joints quivering
From whose path the Atlantics level powers

Cleaned themselves into changing, while you believe
the sea-bloomers and the egg woods which wear
The wooden capsless helmet of the ocean, know

Thy name, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh, near!

I V

If I were a hard leaf, than mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee,
A wave to point beneath thy powder, and share

The impulse of thy strength; only less free
Than how, a uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be.

The remembrance of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip the giddy speed
Scarce seemed a vision, I would never have striven.

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need,
Of lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the moor of life. Oh, Christ! I blest!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: toilless, and swift, and proud.
V

Make me thy lute, even as the lute is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own?
The result of thy mighty harmonies.

Will wake from both a deep, unearthly tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit, where,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Draw me my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth.
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Extinguish round me a new birth.

Scatter as I can sore unholy health
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind.
Be thought through my lips to unawakened earth
Thy trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind!
If winter comes, can spring be far behind?